The Middlebury Campus

VOL. CXXII, No. 21 | MIDDLEBURY, VERMONT, MAY 1, 2025 | middleburycampus.com

ZEITGEIST 2025

Introduction: The spirit of the times, (un)certainty

By NORAH KHAN
Arts & Culture Editor

This year has witnessed surprise and turmoil on many levels. Historic election results in the U.S. and around the world, federal budget cuts, ongoing global conflicts, and seemingly universal political tension have allowed international and national discord to exert daily influence on the lives of Middlebury students. In a word, our moment is defined by uncertainty.

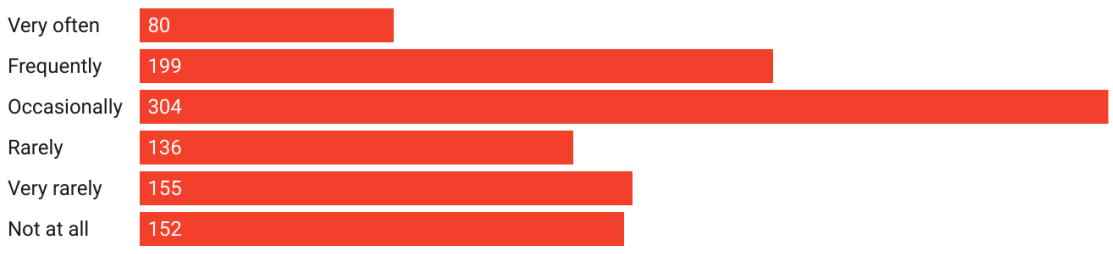
But despite overwhelming international unpredictability, each of us have beliefs that we hold truer each day. That is why the theme of this year's survey is un(certainty), parenthesis included. Many Zeitgeist questions require a high degree of certainty in their responses. On a campus level, Zeitgeist reminds us of our shared characteristics and highlights what makes our community unique, revealing momentary certainties in what unites and divides the student body.

The Trump administration has sent shockwaves throughout the country, especially higher education. Middlebury has felt many of these consequences: budget cuts to employee benefits, funding cuts to research, concerns for international students, funding cuts to Fulbright programs and uncertainty over the future of our DEI office. We have grappled with the harsh reality of stringent immigration policy directly affecting students and heightened Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) presence in communities not so different from our own.

This year has been characterized by (un)certainty on both national and campus-wide levels. This fall, President Emerita Laurie Patton left her role, with Ian Baucom named in January as the 18th President come July. As we move

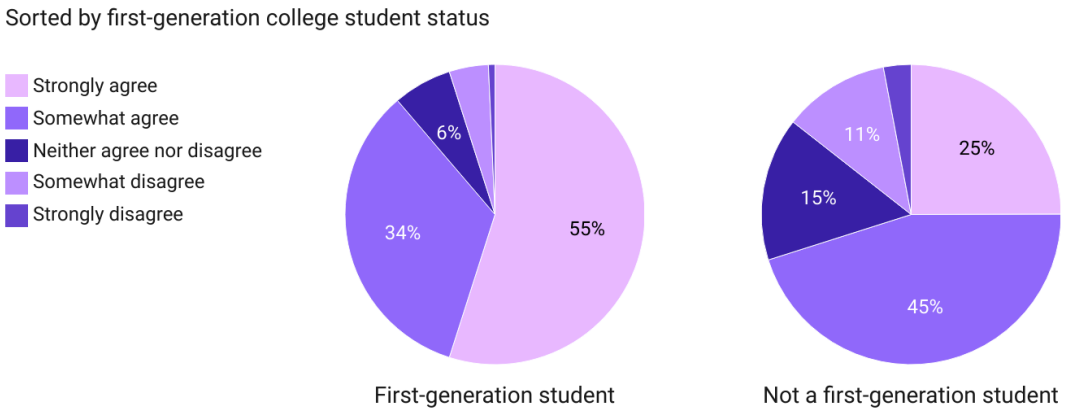
Continued on Page 2

How often do you use A.I. in your classes at Middlebury?

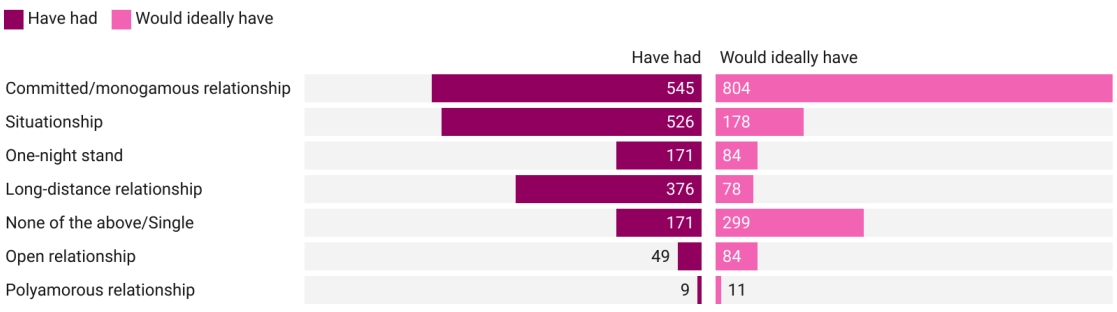


The current Trump administration has significantly impacted my life

Sorted by first-generation college student status



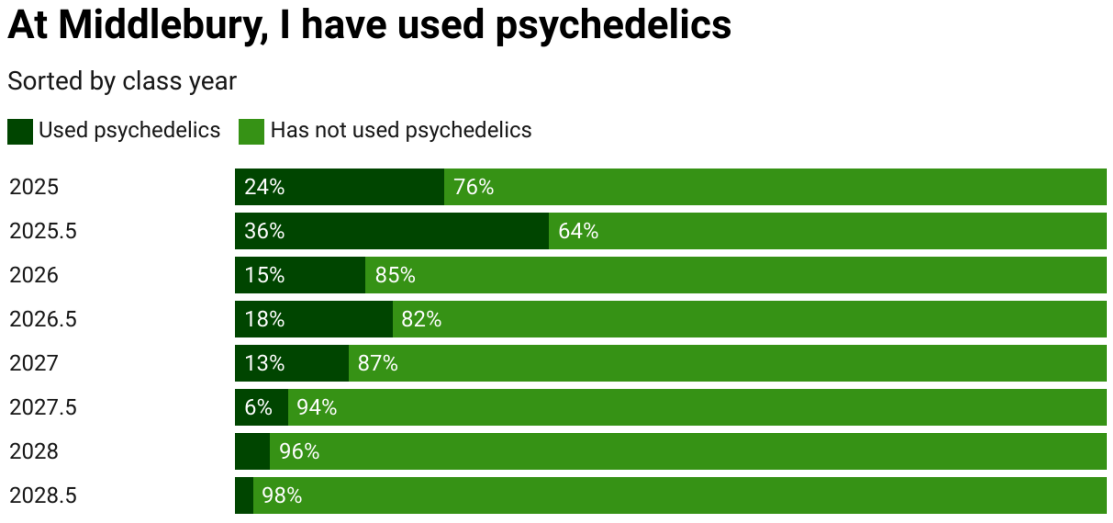
What types of relationships have you had and would you ideally have?



Middlebury's national ranking among other U.S. colleges is important to me

At Middlebury, I have used psychedelics

Sorted by class year



Incoming president endorses budget cuts as faculty plan protest

By RYAN McELROY
Editor in Chief

In a series of moves last week, Middlebury's next president, Ian Baucom, began to stake out positions on key issues at the college and in higher education that will shape his tenure, standing up for the college — and for Monterey.

On April 22, Baucom co-signed a letter condemning the Trump administration's recent treatment of colleges and universities as "unprecedented government overreach and political interference." Interim President Steve Snyder and former President Laurie Patton also signed the letter, which has received over 500 signatories from leaders across higher education.

"We are open to constructive reform and do not oppose legitimate government oversight. However, we must oppose undue government intrusion in the lives of those who learn, live, and work on our campuses," the letter reads.

The statement against external interference came the same week that Baucom first voiced support for the college's recent round of budget cuts — implemented by Snyder and several administrators — that have sparked opposition from faculty, staff and students.

Following his statements and a lack of response from the Board of Trustees, faculty members said they plan to hold a schoolwide walk-out on Thursday, May 8 at 10:30 a.m., when they will deliver the latest faculty motion condemning the cuts to retirement benefits and the recent petition for their reversal to Old Chapel.

On April 18, nearly 200 faculty members voted in favor of this motion, which called for Baucom to openly state his position on the

Continued on Page 5

Politics & Values

HAS THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION IMPACTED STUDENTS' LIVES?

By TING CUI
Senior Sports Editor

To no one's surprise, Middlebury students remain politically engaged. In fact, political engagement has increased this year, with 84% of respondents reporting they "care a lot about a wide range of issues" or "care a lot about a few specific issues" — an increase of eight percentage points from last year. Just over one percent of respondents chose "I don't care at all," while two percent selected "I actively avoid thinking/talking about politics."

The most striking differences emerged across gender and sexual identity. Respondents who identified as transgender male, transgender female, or non-binary reported the highest levels of political engagement, with large majorities indicating they care deeply about a wide range or a few specific issues. Among LGBQ+ respondents, 91% said they care a lot about political issues, compared to 79% of non-LGBQ+ peers. Cisgender female students also reported slightly higher engagement than cisgender male respondents. This pattern likely reflects the growing salience of policies and rhetoric targeting gender identity and sexual orientation, from abortion restrictions and anti-trans legislation to broader culture wars over DEI and school censorship.

Unsurprisingly, Middlebury leans left. When asked to place themselves on a scale from zero (most liberal) to 10 (most conservative), 82% of respondents described their views as a three or below. The most common answer was a two, which was selected by 28% of respondents. Only eight percent of respondents identified as conservative (6–10 range), roughly the same proportion as recent years.

Of those who identified as LGBQ+, 98% said they leaned liberal (classified as a four or below). Those who said they were varsity athletes were more likely to identify as conservative than their non-athlete peers: 20% of varsity athletes identified as a five or above, compared to just eight percent of non-athlete respondents who said the same.

Middlebury's political homogeneity raises some questions for our institution of learning. Does Middlebury's progressive identity disadvantage students in preparing for a complex and ideologically diverse world, or does it act as a necessary sanctuary during politically turbulent times?

On this topic, a new question we asked respondents this year was "How would you describe

Continued on Page 2

Academics

HONOR CODE VIOLATIONS, GUILT REACH HIGHEST LEVELS EVER

By MAGGIE BRYAN
Senior News Editor

Academics saw continuities in some areas this year, including the diverse array of majors represented and the consistent popularity of certain departments. Yet Zeitgeist 7.0 also continued to see concerning patterns from past years, namely rising grade inflation and increasing Honor Code violations.

Zeitgeist respondents reflected a wide range of departments, with the 1,028 respondents representing 52 total majors and tracks (excluding "Undeclared"), an indicator that the liberal arts are alive and well amongst Middlebury's student body. The distribution of majors remains comparable to the past three Zeitgeist surveys, with Economics and Environmental Studies leading the way, accounting for 122 and 105 respondents, respectively.

Interestingly, whereas Political Science and Computer Science were tied in last year's survey, each comprising 6.8% of respondents, this year Computer Science made up five percent of respondents, tied in eighth place with English. The number of double majors also jumped, from 26% last year to 32.6% this year. "Undeclared" remains the largest category, accounting for 17.9% of students.

Over two-thirds of this year's Zeitgeist respondents self-reported Honor Code violations, marking a new high since the question was first asked in 2019. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, only 35% of respondents reported having broken the Honor Code, while 68% said the same this year — almost doubling the proportion of violators in just seven years. Several factors are likely to blame for this increase, including

Continued on Page 2

ZEITGEIST

Sex and Love

Looking for love? Middlebury students are too. From Middlebury Marriage Pacts to residential halls...

By ELLIE TRINKLE

What have you changed your opinion about?

By MADELEINE KAPTEIN

▸ PAGE 3

NEWS

Chuck Davis to deliver 2025 commencement address

By RYAN McELROY, MADELEINE KAPTEIN & MAGGIE BRYAN

College addresses student visa revocations

By HUGO ZHANG

▸ PAGE 5

OPINIONS

We must defend international students

By RUTH HARDY

What does it mean to embrace uncertainty?

By THE EDITORIAL BOARD

▸ PAGE 7

ARTS & CULTURE

Nocturne-ing it up

By VIRGINIA FRAU

A big thief of my time: Adrianne Lenker's "Live at Revolution Hall"

By GUS MORRILL

▸ PAGE 9

SPORTS

Middlebury men's Track & Field claims NESCAC Championship

Five points. That was the razor-thin margin that separated history from heartbreak for the Middlebury men's track and field team who were underdogs heading into...

By TING CUI

▸ PAGE 12

INTRODUCTION

Continued from Page 1

towards the end of the academic year, larger questions remain about how aggressively Middlebury will move to close its annual deficit amidst faculty and staff pushback and looming federal funding cuts.

Despite such troubling events, we have continued to come together as a larger community — admiring leaves in the fall, celebrating Winter Carnival and rejoicing over the first warm days of spring. (Un) certain times allow us to unite. Our campus lends us the opportunity to lean on each other, strengthen the relationships we already have and form new ones.

Last year's theme was dialogue, and we hope to continue discussion between students about their Middlebury experience, certain or not, in all of its areas. So, let's see how students feel about it all. How has Middlebury handled (un) certainty, and how might it continue to thrive despite it all?

DEMOGRAPHICS

By RYAN McELROY
Editor in Chief

Zeitgeist 7.0 received 1,028 responses this year, marking a 40% response rate among the current on-campus population of 2,563 students. Respondents answered 60 questions across eight different sections including Social Life, Safety & Wellness and Politics. All respondents were required to answer 15 core demographic questions at the start of the survey.

The questions on demographics allow for multiple answers to be selected, which often means our results do not align with Middlebury College's official demographic information. Further differences may result from Zeitgeist over or under-representing various groups on campus, or other differences in how The Campus categorizes data.

The largest class year in this year's survey was the class of 2025, which represented 24% of respondents. The class of 2026 and 2027 each represented 18% of the responses, while the first years came in at 17%. Each Feb class represented seven percent or less of survey respondents.

Unlike previous years, where there were significant differences between initial and current class years — likely due to time taken off during the Covid-19 pandemic — there were only minor variations for this year's seniors and juniors. However, enrollment may not be fully stabilized yet. Middlebury recently announced a plan to increase the student body size indefinitely, boosting the size of each matriculated class of students by 20 students to help close the college's chronic deficits.

When asked about their race and ethnicity, 814 people identified as white, comprising 79% of respondents. Over 18% of respondents identified as Asian; 11% as Hispanic or Latino; four percent as Black or African American; three percent as Middle Eastern or North African; and less than one percent as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander.

According to federal disclosures in Middlebury's Common Data Set — which groups all non-U.S. residents together and asks domestic students to choose a single identity — where 54% of degree-seeking undergraduates are recorded as white, 12% Hispanic or Latino, seven percent Asian, five percent Black or African American and less than one percent for all other races.

The classes of 2028 and 2028.5 — the first admitted following the Supreme Court's reversal of affirmative action policies — saw a double-digit decrease in the share of Black students matriculating, raising concerns about the future diversity of Middlebury's student body.

The Campus asks respondents if they identify as a person of color as a standardized point of comparison for the survey. Just under one-quarter of respondents said they identified as a person of color, a similar figure to past years.

Fifty-eight percent of respondents who identified as a person of color said they received financial aid, which was nearly 20 percentage points higher than for students not identifying as a person of color.

Cisgender females once again comprised over half of respondents, this year representing 53% of those who took the survey. Nearly 400 cisgender men — representing 39% of respondents — took Zeitgeist 7.0, while five percent identified as non-binary, less than two percent each identified as transgender male, transgender female or "these options don't define me."

This year's survey also asked about sexuality: 38% said they identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer or questioning (LGBQ+), which is a similar proportion to our results from 2023 and 2024.

Sixteen percent of respondents said they currently or previously have had a disability while at Middlebury, the same figure as last year. Fifty-seven percent of students with a disability identified as LGBQ+, which was significantly higher than the 34% of non-disabled respondents who identified as such.

Zeitgeist 7.0 added a new question inquiring about religious identity to this year's questions. Over half of respondents did not identify with a specific religious faith; 29% said they were agnostic, while 22% said they identified as an atheist and nine percent identified as spiritual. Among named religions, 11% said they were Roman Catholic, nine percent Jewish, eight percent Protestant, two percent Muslim and two percent Buddhist.

No one identified as Mormon, while 66 respondents said "other." The identity "Hindu" was mistakenly omitted from Zeitgeist's list of religious identities; likely some people who said "other" would have selected this option if it was available.

This year, 43% of respondents said they received need-based financial aid from the college or external sources. Middlebury College reported in 2025 that 46% of students are currently on financial aid, a decline from last year's official statistics, in which a majority of students received need-based support.

New England was the best-represented region among U.S. residents again this year, with 29% of respondents saying that they are from the area. The Mideast area represented 22% of students who took the survey, while 13% came from the Far West, nine percent from the Southeast and five percent from the Great Lakes.

Moving outside the U.S., 11% of respondents said they were international students. China was the most represented country with 25 students, followed by seven Canadians and six Indians. Europe had the best showing of the six other continents, with 14 countries with at least one respondent, followed by Asia, with 11 countries present.

Just over half of respondents attended a public high school, while one-third attended a private school, 10% attended a boarding school and five percent attended charter or magnet schools.

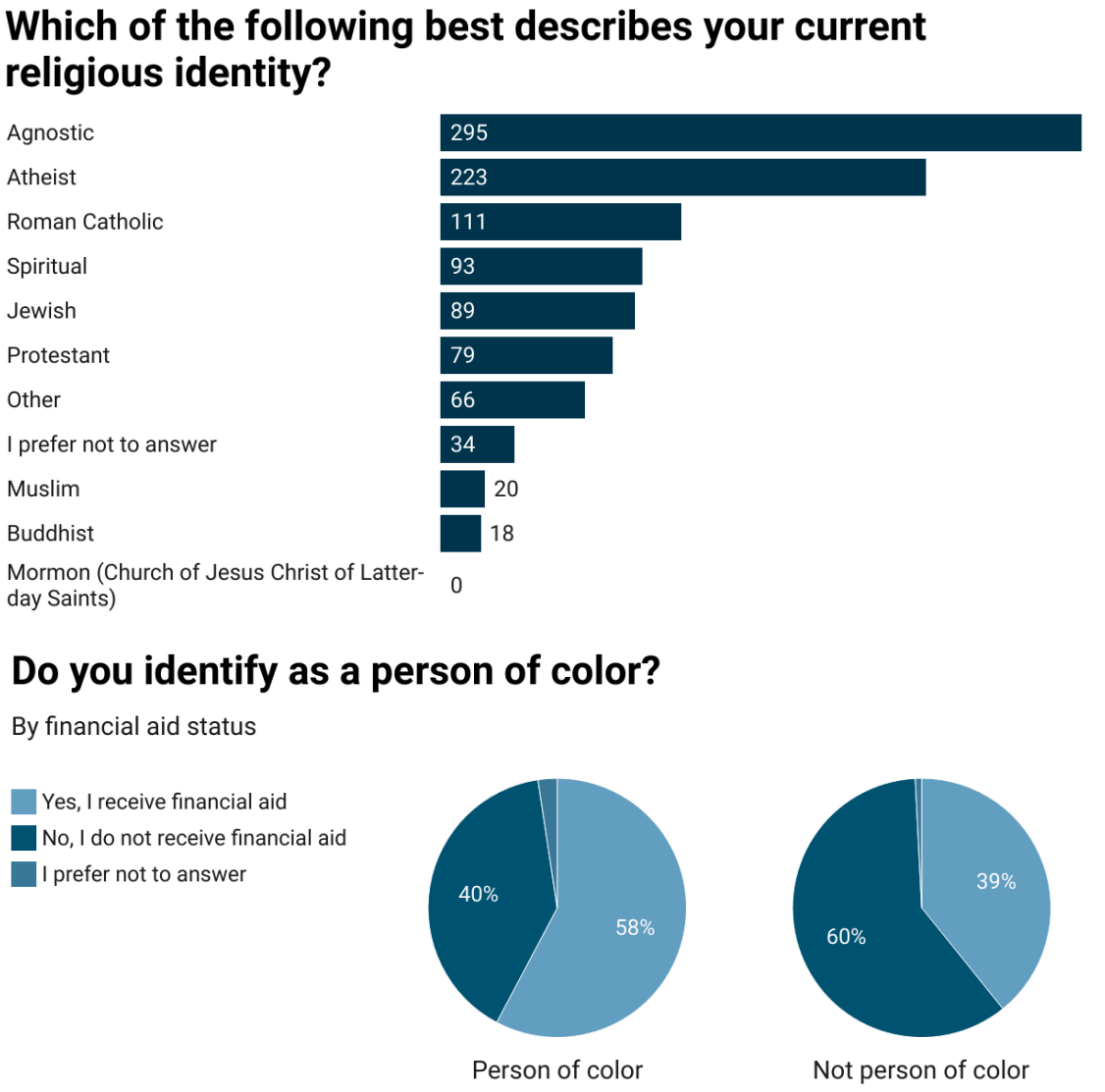
Just 15% of respondents identified as first-generation, meaning neither parent had previously studied at college. That is the same number as last year's result, which was an increase of five percentage points compared to 2022.

Ninety-two percent of those who identified as first-generation students are on financial aid, while just 36% of non-first generation respondents receive financial aid.

Nine out of 10 respondents are not legacy students at Middlebury, while seven percent had one parent attend the college, and three percent had both parents study here.

When asked if they competed in athletics, 14% of respondents said they participated in a varsity sport. Athletes may have been underrepresented in this year's results — the college has previously reported that over a quarter of the student body participates in a varsity sport.

A quarter of varsity athletes reportedly identified as LGBQ+, which is 15 percentage points lower than the proportion of non-athletes identifying with that sexual orientation. Just 12% of varsity athletes identified as people of color; over 26% of non-athletes said they were people of color.



SOCIAL LIFE

By MANDY BERGHELA
Senior Local Editor

The Middlebury experience is shaped not only by academics but also the time students spend outside the classroom — building friendships, joining clubs, working campus jobs and going to the occasional screw. Humans are social creatures — just ask any anthropology major — and the quality of a person's social life plays a critical role in shaping both mental and physical health.

This year, we asked students what really matters to their social life at Middlebury, whether clubs, sports, outdoor recreation, campus jobs or substances, and how comfortable they actually feel on campus.

About 92% of respondents said they feel comfortable at Middlebury. However, the results varied when taking demographics and happiness into account.

This year, 85% of respondents who identify as first-generation said they feel comfortable at Middlebury, compared to 94% who were not first-generation. Similarly, 95% of respondents who did not identify as people of color said they feel comfortable, compared to just 86% of students of color who felt similarly.

Lower comfort levels among students of color comes at a time when Middlebury's own commitment to Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) has prompted concerns. In March, the college announced that the Office of Institutional Diversity, Equity and Inclusion's responsibilities would be redistributed across other administrative areas for at least the next 18 months. This transition raises questions about how support will look moving forward for diverse groups in our student body.

Alcohol and substances have remained a part of student life: Over 900 respondents said they had consumed alcohol while studying at Middlebury.

Marijuana consumption dropped four percentage points this year, to just over two-thirds of respondents. Sixteen percent of respondents reported using psychedelics in college, while 11% had taken Adderall without a prescription and 43% said they had vaped, Juuled or smoked cigarettes.

Febs consistently reported higher rates of marijuana and psychedelic use compared to students in their traditional class years. Among the classes of 2025.5, 2026.5 and 2028.5, 85%, 76% and 52% of respondents, respectively, reported having used marijuana. By comparison, 77%, 69% and 46% of students in the corresponding classes of 2025, 2026 and 2028 reported marijuana use. Drug usage appears to be directly correlated with the amount of time a student has spent at the college.

When it comes to building a social life at Middlebury, some spaces matter more than others. Zeitgeist asked students to select which places, groups and activities mattered to them socially. Dining halls was by far the most important area, with 87% of respondents saying it mattered to their social life at Middlebury, with dorms following close behind at 79%. Forty percent said clubs felt important to socialize, while 37% of respondents identified outdoor recreation as playing a major role in shaping their campus connections. By comparison, activities like club sports (25%), performances and the arts (21%) and varsity sports (14%) drew smaller, but still meaningful, engagement. This suggests that casual, everyday spaces like dining halls and dorm lounges are just as crucial to social life at Middlebury as structured extracurriculars, if not more so.

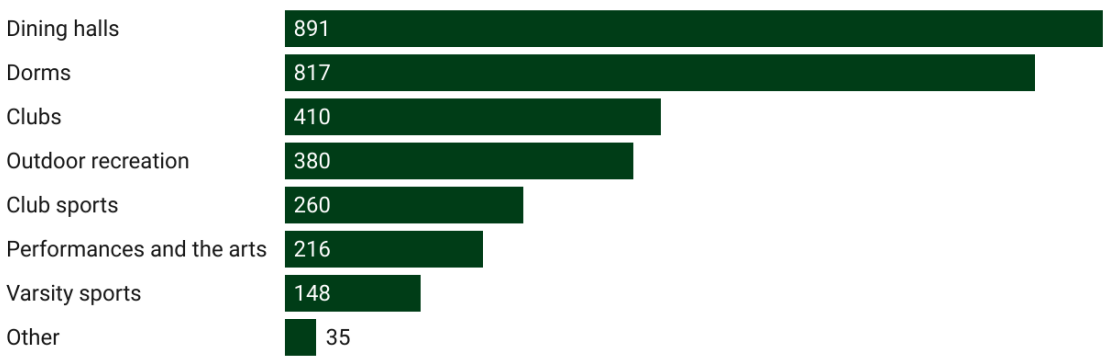
With social houses facing tighter restrictions over the past few years, and nearly a decade passed since dorms were organized around the Commons living communities, many students seem to feel that everyday spaces have taken on even greater significance in shaping campus connection.

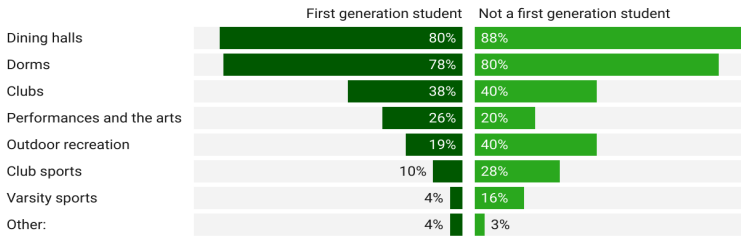
As always, we asked what, if anything, prevents students from spending time with friends. Academic work was by far the biggest obstacle, cited by 939 respondents, which remains consistent with past years. Extracurricular commitments followed, with just over half of students who took Zeitgeist saying these activities limit their social time.

Breaking these questions down by first-generation identity reveals a bigger picture — one that highlights the structural barriers many first-generation students face. While academic work was the top obstacle for both groups, first-generation students were significantly more likely than their peers to cite financial costs (51% compared to 12%), lack of a car on campus (46% compared to 16%) and job responsibilities (37% compared to 21%) as reasons they struggle to spend time with friends. Mental health also surfaced more often among first-generation respondents (36%) than students who are not first-generation (21%).

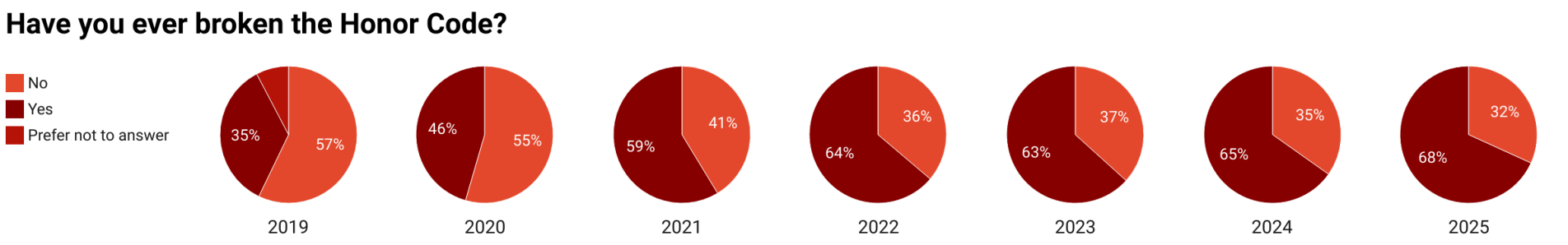
The relative percentages of students working paid jobs this academic year underscores the increased financial pressures first-generation students face. Among students receiving need-based financial aid, 78% reported having worked a paid job this year, compared to 61% of students who do not receive need-based aid.

These disparities reflect the broader reality that not all students experience Middlebury the same way — whether it is which drugs they use, where they socialize or what prevents them from hanging out, Middlebury students must contend with a complex social scene across their four years on campus.


Which of the following are important to your social life at Middlebury?
Please select all that apply
Dining halls 891
Dorms 817
Clubs 410
Outdoor recreation 380
Club sports 260
Performances and the arts 216
Varsity sports 148
Other 35


Which of the following are important to your social life at Middlebury?
First generation student
Not a first generation student
Dining halls 80% 88%
Dorms 78% 80%
Clubs 38% 40%
Performances and the arts 26% 20%
Outdoor recreation 19% 40%
Club sports 10% 28%
Varsity sports 4% 16%
Other: 4% 3%

ACADEMICS



Continued from Page 1

remote and hybrid classes during the Covid-19 pandemic and the rising prominence of Artificial Intelligence (A.I.), especially following the release of ChatGPT in 2022.

It is possible that Zeitgeist, as the only public survey documenting Honor Code violations at Middlebury, has played a role in normalizing admitting to Honor Code violations, thus removing some of the stigma from answering "yes" honestly on this question in our survey.

For this year's increase in Honor Code violations in particular, one factor is likely to blame: A.I.

Honor Code violations across all other categories decreased slightly this year, except for the unauthorized use of A.I., which jumped 17 percentage points and was reported by almost half of respondents. This was the third year that Zeitgeist has asked about unauthorized use of A.I., and since its introduction to the survey in 2023, "Yes" responses have jumped over 10 percentage points each year.

Although there could be some overlap in categories — for example, using A.I. to cheat on a test — respondents had the opportunity to choose multiple types of violations, indicating that they overwhelmingly point to A.I. specifically as a main method of breaking the Honor Code.

This year's survey was the first since Faculty Council and the Student Government Association's joint effort to reform Middlebury's Honor Code, which, as of January, stipulates that students are not required to report their peers for violations, and implements a sliding scale for Honor Code violations. Discussion around voting in the referendum and the new changes could have played a role in increasing guilt over Honor Code violations. This year, 41% of respondents strongly or somewhat agreed with the statement, "I feel guilty about breaking the Honor Code," a seven percentage point increase from last year.

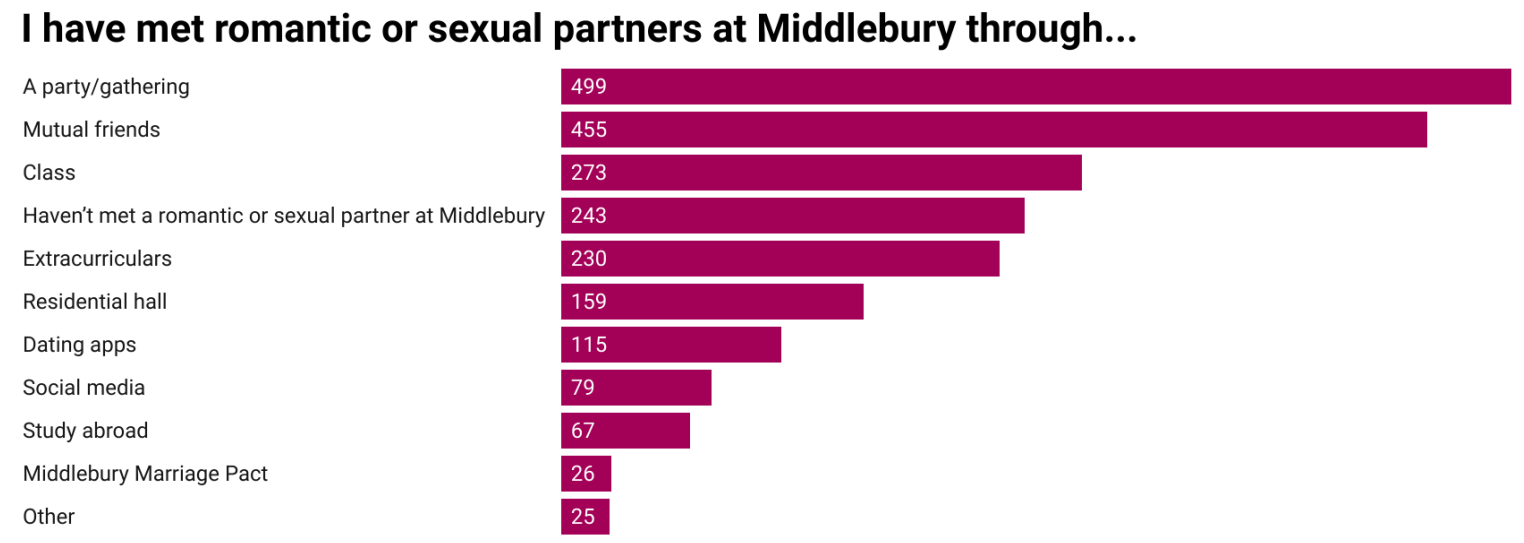
Another ongoing struggle amongst faculty is the effort to reduce grade inflation. Middlebury's average GPA has increased steadily over the past several decades, from 3.00 in 1987 to 3.35 in 2005 and 3.65 in the spring of 2023. The mean self-reported GPA this year was 3.77, likely indicating one of three things: A jump in the college's true mean GPA in the last two years, a tendency for respondents to exaggerate their GPAs for survey purposes, or that Zeitgeist respondents have a higher mean GPA than the rest of the student body.

GPA seemed to have little correlation with Honor Code violations. For example, Literary Studies earns both the title of highest self-reported GPA (3.91) and lowest proportion of Honor Code violations (0.40), tied with Comparative Literature). On the contrary, majors with higher proportions of Honor Code violations, like Film and Media Culture's 94%, reported lower than average GPAs (3.69).

This fall, Middlebury dropped to 19th place on U.S. News & World Report's ranking of liberal arts colleges — its lowest-ever rank on the list since its first appearance in 1988. This drop prompted Zeitgeist to add a question about whether or not respondents agree with the statement "Middlebury's national ranking among other U.S. colleges is important to me." Respondents overwhelmingly expressed their concern over Middlebury's ranking, with 76% of respondents somewhat or strongly in agreement.

SEX & LOVE

By ELLIE TRINKLE
Senior Arts & Culture Editor


I have met romantic or sexual partners at Middlebury through...
A party/gathering 499
Mutual friends 455
Class 273
Haven't met a romantic or sexual partner at Middlebury 243
Extracurriculars 230
Residential hall 159
Dating apps 115
Social media 79
Study abroad 67
Middlebury Marriage Pact 26
Other 25

Looking for love? Middlebury students are too. From Middlebury Marriage Pacts to residential halls, it seems that students are leaving no stone unturned in their search for romantic fulfillment. But how many of these pursuits result in successful relationships? This year, Zeitgeist sought to uncover if "the one" really is somewhere in the Green Mountains.

We got right to it: For the first time ever, we asked respondents if they have ever been in love at Middlebury and if they are currently in a romantic or sexual relationship to better determine if love really is in the air on campus.

Of the 1,028 respondents, 47% said they were currently in a romantic or sexual relationship and 53% reported they were not.

Outgoing seniors in the class of 2025 seem to be the most romantic, with 59% of respondents in a romantic or sexual relationship. Meanwhile, on the other end of the spectrum, "Baby Feb" respondents in the class of 2028.5 had the lowest rate of romantic and sexual relationships, at just 26%.

For the first time this year, we asked everyone's burning question: Have you ever been in love while attending Middlebury? Fifty-eight percent of respondents reported having been in love, whether or not that person was at Middlebury, while 32% said they had never been in love at Middlebury and 10% weren't sure. Cisgender males and cisgender females were most likely to have been in love with someone attending Middlebury, at 44% and 43%, respectively; 35% of non-binary students said they had loved a fellow Middlebury student, followed by 26% of trangender males.

This year, 11% of respondents reported being extremely satisfied with the romantic scene at Middlebury. Nineteen percent said they were somewhat satisfied and 32% said they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Only 26% of respondents reported being somewhat dissatisfied and 11% reported being extremely dissatisfied, with both responses at a four percent decrease from the previous year, respectively.

Twenty-four percent of respondents who are currently in a romantic or sexual relationship reported that they are extremely satisfied with the romantic scene at Middlebury.

Similarly, 29% of respondents currently in a romantic or sexual relationship said they are somewhat satisfied, while only 11% who were not in a relationship said the same. Less than five percent of respondents in a relationship said they were extremely dissatisfied, compared to the 17% extremely dissatisfied respondents who are single.

In 2025, 77% of respondents said they have had at least one sexual partner, the same amount as last year but comparatively lower than previous years. The number of partners whom the majority of respondents have had sex with over the course of the year remained consistent with previous years, typically between one and four sexual partners.

Companionship was the most commonly cited reason for pursuing romantic and sexual encounters at Middlebury, at 73%. Following companionship, respondents said that sex (44%), exploration (41%) and desire to find a future spouse (37%) were reasons for pursuing romantic and sexual encounters at Middlebury.

Middlebury students increasingly desire a committed, monogamous relationship. This year, 79% of respondents said they would ideally be in a monogamous relationship, compared to 76% last year and 72% in 2023. However, only 53% of respondents have been in a committed, monogamous relationship during their time at Middlebury.

Far more respondents (51%) indicated they have had a situationship — meaning an informal, situation-dependent romantic or sexual relationship — compared to the 17% who said they would ideally have one. A similar trend is seen in other options: 17% of respondents have had a one-night stand and only eight percent reported they would ideally have one. Most strikingly, 37% said they have been in a long distance relationship while a mere eight percent cited this as their ideal type of relationship.

The most common way students have met romantic or sexual partners was at parties and gatherings (49%) and through mutual friends (44%), which have been the most highly cited outlets for the past four years. Only 11% of respondents said they had met romantic or sexual partners on dating apps, a decrease of six percentage points from the previous year, which can perhaps be attributed to the recent decline in dating app downloads. Just 26 respondents found love through the Middlebury Marriage Pact, a decline from last year's data.

Eighteen percent of respondents said they would describe their sexuality differently since coming to Middlebury, a noticeable dip from several years ago, with 26% having said the same in 2022.

Those who identify as LGBQ+ continue to be more likely to describe their sexuality differently since coming to Middlebury than those who do not identify as such. This year, 34% of LGBQ+ respondents reported describing their sexuality differently since coming to Middlebury. Only nine percent of respondents identifying as non-LGBQ reported the same.

RESOURCES

By CURRAN AMSTER
Opinions Editor

This year, we asked students about their knowledge of and satisfaction with different resources on campus, such as the Anderson Freeman Resource Center (AFC), International Student and Scholar Services (ISSS) and Student Financial Services (SFS). Whether it be the federal government, economy, or social media, external forces continue to shape life at Middlebury, and our campus resources are intended to help students navigate these challenges. Do they?

The resources that received the highest ratings of student approval were the AFC with 30% of respondents very satisfied, the Scott Center for Spiritual and Religious Life with 31% very satisfied and the Disability Resource Center (DRC) with the highest overall rating of 43% very satisfied.

The resources receiving the lowest ratings were the Civil Rights and Title IX Office, Middlebury College Activities Board (MCAB), and the Student Activities Office (SAO) all with just an eight percent "very satisfied" rating. These results were consistent with last year's data.

Eighteen percent of students said they were very satisfied with Counseling Services, showing an increase of 11 percentage points from last year. In 2023, Middlebury allocated a $4.9 million donation towards mental health resources, including increasing the number of counselors available on campus for students. Satisfaction with the Parton Center for Health and Wellness also jumped 12 percentage points from last year.

Familiarity with resources remained largely unchanged. The most widely known services included the Center for Careers and Internships (CCI) and MCAB with 79% of students indicating some level of satisfaction for both. As in past years, the more respondents using a resource generally meant that resource received a lower rate of satisfaction.

Among those with the lowest ratings is also the CCI with 15% very satisfied and MCAB with eight percent very satisfied. The resources used by the smallest number of Middlebury students completing the survey included ISSS with 76% as well as the Prism Center for Queer and Trans Life, with 75% selecting it did not apply to them.

The number of respondents showing some level of satisfaction with ISSS went up 10 percentage points, with 16% saying they were very satisfied. Among international students who took the survey, 71% said they were very or somewhat satisfied with ISSS. International students have faced uncertainty due to the Trump administration's recent revocations of student visas, meaning that ISSS has been frequently communicating with this subgroup to address their concerns and answer questions.

Students in the class of 2025 indicated they had stronger opinions about MCAB than students in the class of 2028. While only 37% of respondents in the class of 2025 indicated some level of satisfaction with MCAB, over 54% in the class of 2028 indicated a level of satisfaction.

Overall, the percentage of students very satisfied with MCAB dropped five percentage points last year, possibly owing to a scandal over unusual spending patterns by organization leaders that The Campus first reported last May.

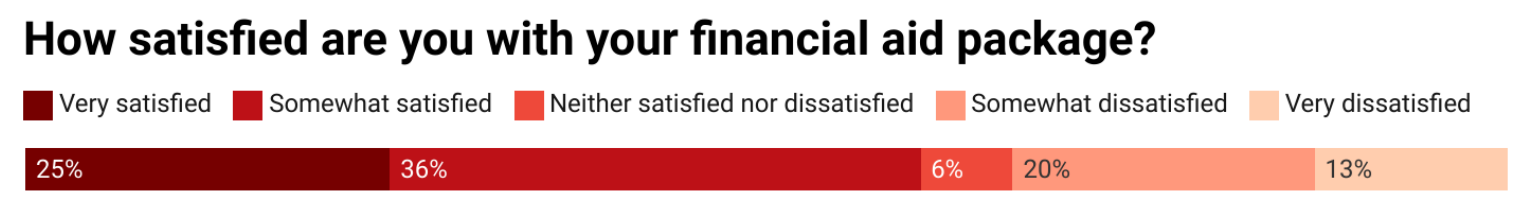
Similarly to approval ratings of MCAB, our results indicate that younger class years are more likely to be satisfied with the SAO. Disapproval of SAO was much higher among the class of 2025 than 2028. Only 20% of the class of 2028 said they somewhat or strongly disapproved of the organization overseeing all student clubs and activities. In contrast, 59% of students in the class of 2025 said they were dissatisfied with the SAO.

Student satisfaction with their financial aid packages increased slightly from last year, with 25% of students saying they were very satisfied this year. Students familiar with Student Financial Services gave the service a slightly more positive rating this year: 22% felt very satisfied in comparison to just 14% in 2024.

First-generation students indicated much higher levels of satisfaction with their financial aid packages, with 76% of first-generation respondents on financial aid indicating they felt very or somewhat satisfied in comparison to 25% of non-first-generation students who said the same. Fifty-three percent of respondents who were not first generation said they did not receive financial aid, compared to just four percent of their first-generation peers in the survey.

Muslim students indicated they were most likely to use the Scott Center for Religion and were overwhelmingly satisfied with this resource, with 93% of students indicating some level of satisfaction. The next most satisfied group were Jewish students, with 79% indicating some level of satisfaction.

Seventy-three percent of both agnostic and atheist respondents said they had not used the Scott Center, suggesting that religious groups on campus are not a major part of their Middlebury experience.



SAFETY & WELLNESS

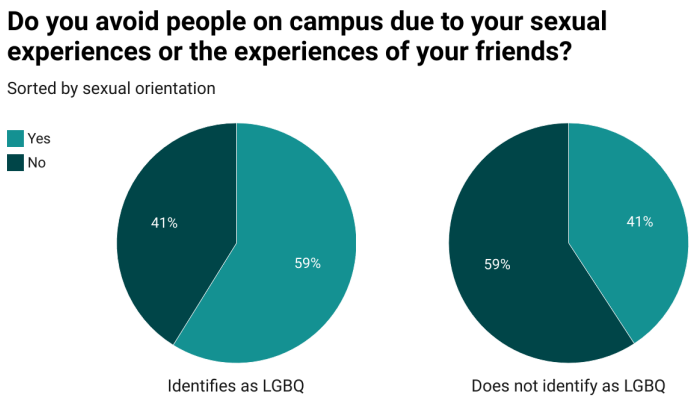
By MAYA ALEXANDER
Opinions Editor

In recent years, the Middlebury student body confronted a number of difficult conversations about on-campus deaths, international conflicts and student activism, and the continued questions about inequities on our campus. The relationship between forces beyond the college and our community's well-being has taken on new significance in the past 12 months, reinforcing the relevance of Zeitgeist's questions about health, security and wellness.

This year, 87% of respondents reported feeling happy, continuing a trend of steady increases in happiness each year since the Covid-19 pandemic.

While happiness among cisgender male and female respondents closely mirror those of all respondents, around 88% and 89% respectively, only 47% of transgender males and 69% of non-binary respondents reported the same.

For the second time, The Campus asked students if they have experienced self-harm or suicidal ideation while at Middlebury.



Twenty-two percent of respondents said "yes," which is the same proportion as last year. Nationally, 13% of college students reported having suicidal ideation and 26% reported engaging in non-suicidal self-injury, according to a survey from with data from 2023–2024.

Among respondents who reported experiencing self-harm or suicidal ideation, 31% said they were not happy, which is 24 percentage points higher than the seven percent of who reported they had not experienced such thoughts or behaviors but did feel unhappy.

Students who are not happy reported that they are more likely to use alcohol or drugs to cope with stress. Nearly half of respondents (46%) who are happy never use these substances to cope with stress, compared to just 30% of respondents who are unhappy. In addition, only six percent who are happy frequently use substances to cope with stress, compared to 20% who are not happy.

Forty-one percent of respondents who identified as a person of color said their Middlebury counselor was able to connect with them based on their identity, an increase of seven percentage points from last year. Still, 68% of respondents who were not a person of color felt their counselor could relate to them, a 27 point gap compared to the just 41% of people of color who felt positively about their counselor.

Sixteen percent of respondents reported that they have been a victim of sexual assault. However, 31% of students said they have had a sexual experience at Middlebury that made them feel uncomfortable, down six percentage points from last year.

The 15 percentage point difference between those who had been sexually assaulted and those who felt uncomfortable in a sexual experience may reflect personal differences in how students define their boundaries of consent, assault and discomfort.

Eight percent of cisgender male students said that they have been a victim of sexual assault, compared to 22% of cisgender females. A little over a quarter of transgender male and non-binary students each reported to have been a victim of sexual assault.

Approximately 11% of students who do not identify as LGBQ+ said that they have been a victim of sexual assault, while 24% of LGBQ+ identifying students said the same — a gap of 13 percentage points. Notably, across these results relating to sexual assault, students who do not identify as cisgender or are LGBQ+ were more likely to say they prefer not to answer.

Fifty-nine percent of LGBQ+ identifying respondents said they avoid people on campus due to their own sexual experiences or the experiences of their friends. For non-LGBQ+ respondents, the reverse was true: 59% of them said they did not avoid people on campus for this reason.

Sixty-two percent of respondents said they have struggled with their relationship to food or exercise during their time at Middlebury, representing a steady decrease since 2022, when 71% reported struggling with their relationship.

The share of LGBQ+ identifying students who reported having struggled with their relationship to food or exercise is 10 percentage points higher (72%) than the general rate found in Zeitgeist this year. The share of respondents struggling who do not identify as LGBQ+, on the other hand, is seven percentage points lower (55%) than the general study body rate.

Just over half of respondents (55%) reported that they are comfortable using the athletic center facilities at Middlebury. Thirty-six percent said that they are comfortable in some places or at some times. Eight percent said they are not comfortable at all.

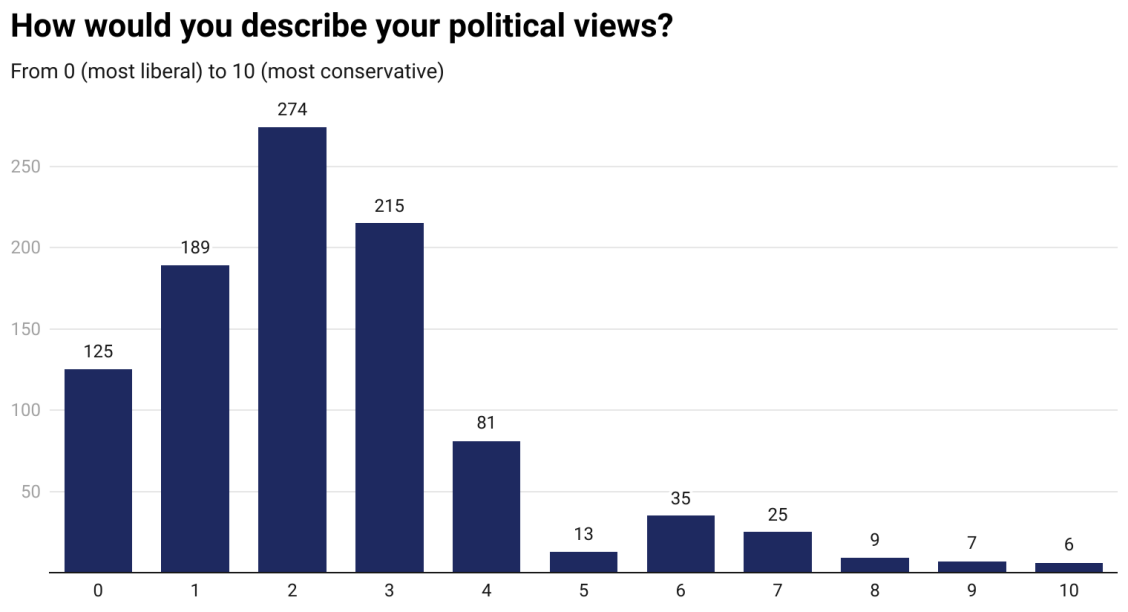
POLITICS & VALUES

Continued from Page 1

Middlebury's political climate?" Almost half (49%) said the college was "somewhat open, but certain opinions dominate," while 34% chose "somewhat restricted, but different opinions exist." When separating out political identities, 53% of self-described liberals answered "somewhat open, but certain opinions dominate," compared to 21% of respondents who identified as conservative and felt the same.

In contrast, seven out of 10 students who self-identify as conservative responded that the political climate was somewhat or very restricted, while just four out of 10 liberal-leaning students felt the environment was restrictive. These results suggest a campus aware of its political leanings and biases, raising concerns about ideological openness and whether all students feel equally able to participate in campus discourse.

Students from marginalized communities strongly agree that Trump has "significantly impacted their lives." People of color are 15 percentage points more likely than their peers to agree strongly. Respondents who are international students shared similar experiences — 82% agreed that the Trump administration has significantly impacted them. This figure aligns with the recent administration's policies targeting marginalized communities through restrictions on immigration as well as LGBTQ+ and DEI initiatives.



The Trump administration is clearly weighing on students' minds. When asked about the most pressing issue of our time, around 250 respondents gave answers related to Trump, the rise of fascism and political extremism, or the decline of democracy, which they attribute to the current administration.

Students who took the survey blamed Trump not just for political polarization, but also for fueling climate denial, authoritarianism and widespread societal decline. Respondents warned of a "slow descent into fascism fueled by white supremacy and corporate greed," and "America's decadent fall into ignorance, bigotry, and imperialism," with many linking these fears directly to the current political climate.

Despite these political anxieties, climate change continued to be the most frequently cited pressing issue of our time for the sixth consecutive year – but not by much. There were only about 15 more climate-related answers compared to those relating to Trump. Students cited not only environmental concerns independently, but increasingly connected climate change to broader systemic issues like inequality, fascism, capitalism and threats to democracy.

The economy, economic inequality and critiques of capitalism were also frequent concerns, with about 110 responses; people who took the survey named "wealth inequality," "class war," "corporatization" and "late-stage capitalism" as urgent threats. Many respondents tied wealth gaps and capitalism to almost every other social problem — climate collapse, political destabilization, healthcare access, etc. — suggesting a systemic view of injustice.

Many also see misinformation as a major problem, tied to a lack of critical thinking, media literacy, and education. Immigration issues remain urgent, often framed around human rights, deportations, and migrant dignity. Gaza and Palestine were frequently mentioned, especially in contexts like "genocide," "foreign policy" and "civil rights," though with 40 less mentions than last year. There were also mentions of women's rights and abortion, the rise of A.I., discrimination, apathy, and the stress of academic work. Several students simply responded that everything felt wrong with the world.

Freedom of speech concerns also revealed an ideological divide. Some worry about censorship from the left, others about threats from fascism and the right. As one student wrote, "There is no encouragement of conversation between different points of view." Another echoed this point: "Threats to free speech on and by both ends of the spectrum."

Some students interpreted the question less seriously, citing concerns like "compulsive shopping," "How do we get NBA ratings up" and the daily dilemma of "lunch and dinner" — and "being single."

In an era where the Trump administration is directly impacting so many of our students and Middlebury as an institution, the world around us seems increasingly unstable. Ongoing debates over immigration, federal funding and political polarization reflect deeper tensions that show no signs of easing, shaping both our national politics and daily reality at Middlebury.

What is one thing you have changed your opinion about in the past 12 months?

By MADELEINE KAPTEIN
Managing Editor

Life at Middlebury demands that we voice countless opinions each day. We raise our hands in class to offer our thoughts on a set of sonnets, a historical text or the most efficient approach to a physics problem. We debate our most trivial takes and dire beliefs over meals in Proctor or Ross: Which breakfast potatoes are the best? Which candidate should we vote for in the SGA election? Who should we set our friend up with for the screw? Where is the line between partying and alcoholism? Is Crossroads coffee actually worth the price? Is it OK to cut in the dining hall line?

And whether we vocalize them daily or not, the undercurrents of our more decisive opinions — otherwise known as our values — shape our experiences here. Some conversations carry heavier stakes: What should we do about the climate crisis? Where do we stand on Israel-Gaza? What should our right to protest look like? Who should bear the brunt of the college's $14.1 million deficit?

The Campus has published 61 op-eds and 21 editorials this academic year about everything from divestment to wealth inequality to the honor code to the impending demolition of Battell Hall. Our community has no shortage of opinions and no shortage of opportunities to voice them — but little light is shed on how our opinions may change as we grow throughout our four years here. College is about figuring out who you are and where you stand, and this does not happen without trial and error.

So we asked Zeitgeist survey-takers: What is one thing you've changed your opinion about in the past 12 months?

Shifting opinions about world and U.S. politics, Donald Trump, Israel-Palestine and current issues surrounding the economy, transgender rights, free speech, abortion, race, affirmative action and gun control were common, with 38% of the 576 respondents who answered the question having identified one of these topics in their answers.

Fifty people said they changed their opinion on the Israel-Palestine conflict, mostly without specifying how. Others touched on dwindling trust in democracy and the U.S. as a stable world power since the 2024 presidential election. Five respondents expressed their plunging respect for Elon Musk.

Some students expressed a renewed belief in tolerating a wider range of opinions, while others have resolved to draw the line at humoring Trump supporters.

"Prior to the election, I would have said that I disliked anyone who voted for Trump and was not interested in any sort of relationship with them. I've redefined my relationships towards conservatives and looked to be more open-minded," one student wrote.

"I never used to immediately judge someone for supporting Trump. However, if they still do, I make immediate assumptions about them," another student wrote.

Seventeen percent of respondents shared their changing perceptions of themselves and their interpersonal relationships. Twenty-four students commented on their own self-esteem, most describing upticks in their confidence and their faith in their own success. Forty-one reflected on various aspects of their social circles and friendships and 34 mentioned their love and sex lives. While some simply wrote "social scene," "love," or "hookup culture" others elaborated on the trajectories of their thinking.

"I became more appreciative of the benefits of social connections with people who I may not be very fond of," one student wrote.

"I get why people act the way they do when they are in love now," another said.

"I no longer like the idea of hookups and plan to not participate in this culture anymore," someone else shared.

"Some people are just assholes," another wrote.

Ten percent of respondents wrote about how their opinions of Middlebury have changed. Some wrote about blooming or waning feelings of belonging on campus.

"I have started to doubt that Middlebury was the right place for me," one student wrote.

"I didn't used to think that I could be happy at Midd, but I feel a lot more comfortable now, fortunately," another wrote.

Others chastised the administration, revealed developing critiques of specific academic departments, or commented on their changing beliefs about the political climate on campus. Some think that Middlebury is more or less politically liberal than they used to believe and others described recently identifying close-mindedness and ignorance in their peers. A few exposed their changing dining hall preferences.

Several students have post-Middlebury life on the brain, with 27 people reporting having reworked their vision for life after graduation.

"I do not want to work a corporate job right out of college," one student wrote.

"I think it's okay if I wait a bit and work part-time until I can find something that's right for me," another wrote.

Of the eight students who shared changing their opinions on Artificial Intelligence (AI), four specified having come to terms with its advantages.

"I used to believe that under no circumstances should I ever use AI, but when looking at the future, I think it's important to grow with technology instead of try to fight it," a student wrote.

Students have adopted new hobbies, from ice fishing to art. Several have changed their attitudes towards drugs and alcohol, with some newly partaking and others pivoting to abstaining. A handful of respondents made "men" the sole subject of their response. "The sacredness of rationality," "The existence of God," "raisins" and "What happiness is" were all in the mix.

Forty-eight respondents, ostensibly in addition to the 452 mysterious students who did not fill out this last question, said they have not changed their opinion on anything or that they do not know which of their opinions have changed.

"I never change my mind," someone wrote.

"I am not sure. Embarrassingly," a student confessed.

Is indecisiveness a gift or a curse?

Incoming president endorses budget cuts as faculty plan protest

Continued from Page 1

college's financial problems. The college's graduate school in Monterey has become a source of controversy on the Vermont campus since the college announced that it contributed $8.7 million to this year's budget deficit.

Standing in the Samson Center on the college's California campus, Baucom signaled his commitment to the struggling graduate school, which is currently following a four-year financial plan to reverse revenue shortfalls caused by under-enrollment. He rejected calls from faculty and some staff members to undo the budget cuts.

"I support the truly difficult financial decisions affecting the college that our board, President Snyder, and his leadership team have recently made," Baucom said. "As members of our Middlebury community have expressed, their cost is real, they affect real lives, but I firmly believe that they come from a deep loyalty to the institution."

The college shared his recent remarks in a schoolwide email on Thursday, April 24.

For some on the college's Vermont campus, however, the issue of Monterey is far from settled. Some faculty took issue with the blunt announcement of Baucom's opposition to divesting from Monterey and support for the college's financial cuts.

"I mean, I don't know him, but it seemed ill-advised, given the mood on campus," said Laurie Essig, professor of Gender, Sexuality and Feminist Studies.

At their next open meeting on Tuesday, May 13, Faculty Council intends to vote on a new motion calling to divest from MIIS in the next three years.

"We call on the Board and administration to immediately begin a comprehensive restructuring of the Institute with the goal of closing the California campus within three years," a draft of the motion obtained by The Campus states. "With the institution as a whole facing severe budget challenges and the Middlebury Institute's financial position continuing to deteriorate, it is the sense of the faculty that Middlebury can no longer maintain our California campus."

The college's chapter of the American Association of University Professors (AUUP) plans to meet with Baucom in July, as reported at the last faculty meeting two weeks ago. The AAUP sponsored the upcoming faculty motion, which aims to correct the roughly $300 million loss over the past 20 years since Monterey's acquisition.

"There wasn't an ever expanding pie of resources, and because of new resources that went to Monterey, that's already begun to affect the educational experience here, but it will affect it even more if employees can't believe that their contracts will be honored by the college," said Essig, who also serves as the vice president of Middlebury's AAUP chapter.

Essig added that the college's leadership needs to address internal financial problems and low morale before it can effectively deal with external threats to funding and academic freedom posed by the Trump administration.

Amid debates over next steps, faculty have circulated a petition demanding the reversal of the cuts to their retirement, which over 600 students, professors, staff and alumni had signed as of last week. In a recent email, faculty leaders of the movement against budget cuts polled staff and faculty on what kinds of resistance they may support.

The measures suggested in the email include skipping the faculty procession at Commencement on May 25, protesting outside the Board of Trustees meeting this month, withholding grades from students for varying periods of time, walking out of classes and declining to ratify the list of graduating seniors this year. Respondents could mark each option with their opinion, ranging from "strongly support" to "strongly oppose."

The walk-out and march to Old Chapel will aim to inspire the Board of Trustees to reverse their commitment to Monterey, since the board will be meeting from May 8–10.

"We'd like the Board of Trustees to take fiduciary responsibility and acknowledge that we cannot continue to support Monterey at the cost of Middlebury College," Essig explained.

Despite the growing resistance, Baucom signaled that the recent cuts to retirement benefits and staff buyouts are not the end of the college's financial course corrections. Middlebury has previously stated it will review employee healthcare plans by fall 2025 and may consider further retirement incentives to balance annual deficits.

"I also know that there are more difficult decisions to come. It is too early in my time — and I am not yet president — to know what form those decisions should take," Baucom stated, adding that he was focused on "acting in ways that are best not only for the moment but for the long future to come — the future of Middlebury as a whole."

Investment banker, philanthropist Chuck Davis to deliver 2025 commencement address

By RYAN McELROY, MADELEINE KAPTEIN & MAGGIE BRYAN
Editor in Chief, Managing Editor & Senior News Editor

Chuck Davis, a philanthropist and investment executive who spent two years at Middlebury before transferring to the University of Vermont, will deliver the 2025 commencement address.

A native of Burlington, Vermont, Davis worked for Goldman Sachs for 23 years before founding his own investment firm, Stone Point Capital, where he currently leads the group as chairman and co-executive chief officer, overseeing over $45 billion of assets. He and his wife Marna Olsen Davis serve as co-chairs of the Fibrolamellar Cancer Foundation, which they founded together with their son Tucker, who passed away from fibrolamellar cancer at the age of 28 in 2010. The foundation's mission is to support research to improve outcomes for patients of the rare, understudied disease.

Before starting his own firm, Davis worked as an investment banker in New York, going on to serve as the worldwide head of investment banking, head of various Financial Services divisions and a general partner for Goldman Sachs. Stone Point is well known for its "Elephant Process," a method in which the firm's investment teams conduct broad searches for the best partners in the financial services sector, leveraging industry expertise and relationships to receive $35 billion in capital commitments since its founding in 1998.

Outside of his investment work, Davis has also served on the board of directors for companies such as the AXIS Capital Holdings Limited and the Progressive Corporation, an insurance company. He also worked as the former chairman of the Hershey Company Board of Directors, a role for which he was named one of 2018's "Outstanding Directors" by the Financial Times. He remains connected to Vermont businesses as the chair and director of the board of Beta Technologies, one of the first electric plane manufacturers, based in South Burlington, Vt.

In addition to his corporate leadership, Davis has served as a trustee for academic institutions, including the University of Vermont (UVM), St. Michael's College and St. John's University.

Marna Davis actively volunteers in her New York community as a docent at the Museum of the City of New York, an English-language teacher and as a member of the board of directors for the Shelburne Museum. She and her husband will both receive honorary degrees from Middlebury next month.

As dedicated philanthropists, Davis and Marna run the Chuck & Marna Davis foundation, where they donate to several community based organizations. They have donated to the Shelburne Museum, UVM's Dudley Davis Center, Shelburne Farms, Spectrum Youth and Family Services, Lake Champlain Community Sailing Center, Vermont Youth Conservation Corps and Hack Club, a network of high school computer science clubs.

Their foundation began with the assistance of Goldman Sachs in 1987 under the name Chuck and Marna Davis as Trustees, then changing its name in 2022. After observing a disparity in Vermonters' willingness to volunteer and ability to give financially, they chose to focus their philanthropy in their home state in 2020, with the Fibrolamellar Cancer Foundation as one exception. Their son, Tyler Davis, joined the foundation as a trustee in 2024.

The family also gave a four-million-dollar gift to support the construction of UVM's Multi-Purpose Center project, which is a campus hub for recreation, wellness and fitness for its students. The center is named for Chuck Davis' mother, Phyllis "Phiddy" Davis, who graduated from Vermont's flagship state university in 1945.

After attending Middlebury College, Davis transferred to UVM, where he majored in physical education and was a player on the tennis and soccer teams. The two-sport athlete found success in Burlington and beyond, winning the Yankee Conference singles tournament in 1972 for tennis. Davis also shared the Hal Greig Award, which is given to the athlete who best improved the school's soccer program "through his desire, hustle and love of the game," according to a UVM press release. He was inducted into the UVM Athletic Hall of Fame in 2001.

Following UVM, Davis went on to receive a Master's in Business Administration from the Columbia Business School in 1975, where he was elected to Beta Gamma Sigma, the international business honor society.

COURTESY PHOTO / STONE POINT

Commencement will be held on May 25, 2025 on McCullough Lawn. Heather McGhee, author of the New York Times bestseller "The Sum of Us: What Racism Costs Everyone" and chair of the nation's largest online racial justice organization, will receive an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters. Dario Robleto, an American artist, researcher and filmmaker who works on transdisciplinary projects will receive the same honorary doctorate. Robleto visited campus on Oct. 15, 2024, when his film, "Ancient Beacons Long for Notice," was on display at the Middlebury College Museum of Art in the exhibit, "An Invitation to Awe."

School officials address student immigration record revocations

By HUGO ZHANG
News Editor

Since the college's announcement on April 16 that the U.S. government had terminated the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System (SEVIS) status of one Middlebury undergraduate student and three Monterey Institute of International Studies (MIIS) alumni, administrators have further addressed the situation. At a faculty meeting on Friday, April 18, Vice President for Student Affairs Smita Ruzicka shared that the Middlebury student chose to leave the country out of caution.

Emphasizing the institution's commitment to student safety, privacy and academic continuity, Ruzicka detailed protocols to respond to record status changes, addressed misinformation circulating among professors and encouraged faculty flexibility in assisting affected students.

Ruzicka said that the college had been monitoring international students' SEVIS status since before the student's status was revoked. The college's protocol is to immediately contact the student and alumni whose records are terminated to help them consider their next steps.

"When we found out about the SEVIS records, just like many other students across the country, we were operating under the assumption that the student did not know this had happened," she said. "And because we're a small residential undergraduate institution, it is really important for us to make sure we are talking to a student in person."

Ruzicka mentioned that the embassy or consulate of a student's home country may also directly communicate with them to discuss their next steps.

She distinguished between SEVIS and visa status, adding that the reason for the revocations of the Middlebury community member's records is uncertain.

"[Visa] is just an entry and exit into the country. In the before times, visa revocation did not necessarily mean that the institution would break the progress or the academic standing of the student," she said. "In SEVIS, visa revocation is oftentimes also showing as a status revocation, which puts the student in a very vulnerable position."

On Friday, April 25, the Trump administration restored thousands of international student visas that it had previously revoked. However, the administration has said that this is only temporary — the reversal marks a period of immigration officials working on a new system of review and termination for SEVIS records and visas. Students who had their legal status restored could have it terminated again in the future.

Ruzicka stated that the Middlebury's administration did not explicitly tell the international student to leave campus. Rather, the student and their parents came to the decision independently.

"I want to be very clear. We did not kick the student out. The student was not forced to leave our campus," she emphasized. "We have not and will not take that approach unless we get a law order. And even then we're going to assess what that means."

Ruzicka also denied any rumors that the college provided the names of students involved in the Palestinian solidary encampment from last spring.

"While I can not comment on the individual student, I once again stand here and say we did not turn in any list, we did not have any lists compiled of students in the encampment," she said.

Addressing rising concerns about more SEVIS records or visas being terminated, Ruzicka described how the college is working on individualized plans to support international students in their education who may face similar vulnerabilities.

She suggested faculty members increase flexibility with these students. While the college cannot disclose the specific circumstances of individual students, student deans will communicate with faculty to support international students who may leave abruptly. To prepare for potential future disruptions, Ruzicka noted that academic administrators are exploring broader contingency plans, such as sending students to Middlebury Schools Abroad.

While Middlebury does not currently fund or provide legal services for students, Ruzicka shared that she will communicate with trustees to explore potential funding consideration.

The meeting was part of a broader effort by the faculty council to keep the campus community informed about the evolving situation, according to Jason Mittell, chair of Faculty Council and professor of Film and Media Culture. Mittell shared that he has been in conversation with the Office of the Registrar about further steps, indicating their confidence that Middlebury has methods to support the international student's schooling when they have to be off campus.

"We went through a whole bunch of different scenarios, and we feel pretty confident that we will be able to sort of administratively and bureaucratically deal with this," he said. "[The registrar] said that they can probably figure out a way in most instances to allow an enrollment to continue even if a student can not be on campus."

One faculty member asked whether the college has set housing options for students who feel unsafe to travel internationally this summer. Ruzicka responded that the college has not prepared a general solution, and are for the time being focusing on individual plans for individual students.

Ruzicka concluded by sharing the college's efforts to educate international students on digital safety and practical risk management. She noted that many students have expressed concern about their social media presence and digital footprint, and emphasized that while the college is not instructing students to remove content, it is providing guidance on how to better protect themselves online.

"We do not want to dictate what every student should do," she emphasized, "but we are trying to make sure they are as prepared as possible."

Editor's Note: Jason Mittell is the faculty advisor to The Campus. He had no role in the publication of this article.

RETRO REALM
MIDDLEBURY VT
10 Washington Street in the Shaw's Plaza
The Newest Entertainment Option in Middlebury

Local Vermont author explores motherhood and climate in spiritually rooted debut novel

By LANGAN GARRETT
Staff Writer

COURTESY PHOTO / CHELSEA STEINAUER-SCUDDER

Local author Chelsea Steinauer-Scudder, who visited the Ilsley Library, writes about motherhood in an ecological crisis.

In her book "Mother, Creature, Kin," local Rochester, Vt. author Chelsea Steinauer-Scudder weaves threads of motherhood, ecology, and spirituality together to explore what it means to raise a child in a world facing profound environmental and existential challenges. On April 8, Steinauer-Scudder visited the Ilsley Public Library to read and discuss the book.

Steinauer-Scudder explained how her childhood and life growing up in the Great Plains of Nebraska has shaped many of the themes that she explores in the book.

"My father is an ecologist and a prairie botanist... so I had a very plant-forward childhood... I was raised sort of culturally Jewish through my mom, but I grew up in a pretty secular home, and so my spiritual piece that weaves its way through this book came during college and graduate school," Steinauer-Scudder said in an interview with The Campus.

During her time in graduate school and while working for nonprofits, Steinauer-Scudder became further immersed in the world of spiritual ecology. She spent extended time learning about how different people around the world understand the human relationship to place through a spiritual lens. She was fascinated by the diversity of thought and the ways people root their sense of belonging in the natural world.

Steinauer-Scudder spoke about tradition and spiritual connection to the land, using concrete narratives that articulate this bridge.

"There's a story about this tiny village in India where they plant 111 trees every time a baby girl is born...[and] Native Hawaiians on the Big Island of Hawaii who are protesting the building of this giant telescope on top of their sacred mountain," Steinauer-Scudder said.

Steinauer-Scudder became pregnant just as the Covid-19 lockdown began in March 2020, prompting a personal reckoning with what it meant to bring a child into a world marked not only by a global pandemic but also by an escalating ecological crisis. Specifically, she found herself reflecting deeply on the state of collapsing ecosystems and species extinction.

In writing the book, Steinauer-Scudder sought to fill a gap she noticed in the literature. Unable to find a book that explored spirituality, ecology and motherhood in a unified narrative, she decided to write one herself.

"I think there's a saying, you write the book you need," Steinauer-Scudder said. "I set out to kind of grapple with that question of what it means to be a mother right now. And, not only in terms of mothering my daughter, but what it means to be a mother in terms of giving care and attention and nourishment to the natural world around us, as part of that, as part of an ethic of ecological care."

Steinauer-Scudder cited several literary influences who shaped her thinking and writing. For example, Robin Wall-Kimmerer's book "Burning Sweetgrass" explores motherhood alongside a broader ethical relationship with the natural world. She also drew inspiration from "Silent Spring" author Rachel Carson's profound understanding of ecology and the way she approached the natural world — with deep curiosity, attentiveness, and reverence.

"[Carson] did not have any biological children near the end of her life," Steinauer-Scudder said. "She adopted her great grand-nephew when his mother passed away, but she just has this way of both writing about but also engaging with the natural world that is so attentive and full of curiosity and wonder. So, she was sort of a role model for me about what it looks like to give that depth of attention and care to a species and to [something] other than human life."

Steinauer-Scudder hopes that in reading her book, people will become more thoughtful about their sense of place and their relationship to the environment, as well as the profound connection between spirituality and motherhood that has shaped her own life.

"I hope people take away... that all of us have the capacity for deep love of place and for giving care to the places where we live, and for starting to do that work of mending and repair and sort of healing our relationship to the living world."

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO EMBRACE UNCERTAINTY?

Editorial

The editorial represents the opinion of the Middlebury Campus Editorial Board.

Uncertainty is uncomfortable and overwhelming. It can be isolating and anxiety inducing, and it can make questions about our lives even weightier. But uncertainty also lays the groundwork for transformation. It prompts us to consider the norms we take for granted and invites deeper, more critical conversations about the world.

We shouldn't mistake uncertainty for powerlessness. Things may be unclear, but that doesn't mean they are binary. When we reduce the world to black-and-white thinking, to "certainty," we risk falling into apathetic attitudes, and it's crucial that we do our best to resist this mindset. To do so, we must embrace uncertainty as a mark of intellectual strength rather than thoughtless weakness. We should value and respect those who have the courage to admit when they don't have all the answers.

In Zeitgeist 7.0, we asked Middlebury students to reflect on their opinions that have changed in the past 12 months. The responses were wide-ranging — touching on politics, fashion, Elon Musk and artificial intelligence. Even members of our Editorial Board offered a diverse set of reflections. Some seniors felt like they had reconsidered their post-graduation plans, developing a more open perspective as to what their next step could look like. Others expressed a shaken sense of stability — not only at Middlebury, but within the broader U.S. and the world. Others didn't feel compelled to answer the question at all, instead emphasizing a deeper connection to what they already believed in.

Rather than a time of radical ideological shifts, this year has felt like a moment of quiet reflection. Many of us did not reverse course entirely or upend our foundational beliefs. Instead, we became more rooted in them. Faced with instability on campus and beyond, we've seen how students have responded not by flipping their opinions, but by clinging more tightly to the values that feel familiar and secure.

For many, this was the first year that Middlebury felt truly vulnerable to external forces. From confronting a budget deficit with disruptive cuts to witnessing student encampments and national political jabs at higher education, we are seeing firsthand that Middlebury is not immune to forces of the outside world. It has been jarring to see other similar college communities be punished for their actions while knowing that Middlebury could be next. While we may have felt secluded in the past, this year has shown us just how fragile the Middlebury bubble truly is.

In an age of political polarization and cultural division, changing one's mind — even at Middlebury, where the liberal arts environment should be a prime location to have open dialogue — can feel risky. Yet as many students reported in Zeitgeist this year, campus can feel like an echo chamber of ideas and restricted viewpoints that lack any incentive to deeply challenge our own perceptions. In a small, ideologically homogeneous setting, dissent can be difficult and uncomfortable.

SUSANNA SCHATZ

And we are worn out. Today's world, which has come to be the barrage of headlines and crises, demands constant engagement and reaction, leading to a collective feeling of "opinion fatigue." It's not that Middlebury students don't care about what is happening around the country. It's that constantly forming opinions on every issue, at every moment, is mentally and emotionally draining. It creates a fear of saying the wrong thing or not being informed enough to speak up. Sometimes, all we want is to think about what outfit to wear, where to eat lunch or which classes to register for. When the big picture feels increasingly unstable, we are forced to give up some of our casual conversations. The burden of attentiveness can be exhausting.

But uncertainty can be spun into productivity. It creates space for reflection and growth, and for reaffirmation of our collective values. It gives us a chance to slow down, ask better questions and reconnect with what truly matters. Zeitgeist 7.0 invites us to embrace this discomfort — to reflect not just on what we believe, but how those beliefs shift with the spirit of our times. Our perspectives may not have changed drastically, but they've been tested, deepened and refined.

If we can meet uncertainty with curiosity rather than with fear, we can learn to reconcile with it. In this space, we can have open dialogue and find ways to grow that we otherwise would not have considered. In the midst of a chaotic world, there is opportunity — if we are willing to look for it.

WE MUST DEFEND INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

Op-Ed

Ruth Hardy *is a State Senator for the Addison District. She delivered these remarks on the floor of the Vermont Senate on April 22, 2025.*

Recently, Vermont has become a focal point for disturbing actions against international students. This includes ICE using Vermont as a stopping point for the imprisonment of a Tufts University student, Rümeysa Öztürk; the cancellation of a humanitarian parole program affecting two students at Champlain Valley Union High School; the arrest of Vermont resident and Columbia University student, Mohsen Mahdawi; and the unjustified visa revocation of a Middlebury College student.

Over the past few weeks, an estimated 1,500 students from 250 colleges nationwide have had their visas revoked, mostly without notice or reason. What does this inhumane treatment of international students tell us about the value the U.S. government puts on positive relations with foreign countries? On the lives of young people? On education in the United States?

The United States has long been a destination for international college students and a popular place for high school exchange students. And while here, these students make lasting friendships and contribute deeply to their schools and communities. Some, like Mohsen Mahdawi, stay here with the dream of becoming citizens.

There are about 35,000 college students in our state, most of them from places other than Vermont. Among my constituents are 2,500 students at Middlebury College, which bills itself as having "one of the most immersive and globally engaged experiences in higher education," with hundreds of international students studying and dozens of international professors teaching on campus throughout the year.

My district, our state and our country have long been welcoming and encouraging to international students and professors. Yet now, the Trump administration, with reckless and inhumane abandon, is severing the rights of international students, and entrapping and imprisoning these young people without cause or care.

For the past 20 years, my family has been a local "host" family for Middlebury College international students, providing them a welcoming place to call home while they're at college. These students have become like family to us, and we still keep in touch with each of them.

My family also spent a year living in Göttingen, Germany where my husband earned a fellowship that brought together scholars from around the world. It was part of a decades-long program to repair the bonds between German universities and academics around the world after World War II and the horrors of fascism. Now two of my daughters are studying and volunteering abroad, so I know what it's like to send your child far away. I am sure that parents of international students studying here in the U.S. are fearing for the safety of their children in a way they never have before.

We cannot turn our backs on students from other countries who come to Vermont to live and learn. After my time in a German university town, I know that among the first people the Nazis detained and evicted were students and professors. They drained universities and scarred institutions and academics with false accusations. That is exactly what we are seeing now in America. The dozens of international faculty members who are permanent residents in my district are scared they are next.

We in Vermont cannot stand by quietly and let national leaders repeat fascist history. We must speak up and act to protect the rights and safety of international students and professors in our towns and on our campuses.

Editor's Note: Hardy's remarks have been lightly edited for The Campus' style standards.

COURTESY PHOTO

Senator Ruth Hardy addressed the Vermont Senate on April 22, discussing the status of international students in her district.

The Middlebury Campus

EDITOR IN CHIEF
*Ryan McElroy **
MANAGING EDITOR
*Madeleine Kaptein **
BUSINESS DIRECTOR
*Orly Berke**
DESIGN DIRECTOR
Eliza Bernene
DIGITAL DIRECTOR
Sheila Lam
COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR
James Thomas
NEWS DESK
*Maggie Bryan *†*
*Rosella Graham **
Luke Power
Evan Weiss
Hugo Zhang
LOCAL DESK
*Mandy Berghela *†*
Izzy Ronda
*Ben Wagner **
Agnes Wang
OPINIONS DESK
*Maya Alexander **
*Curran Amster **
*Gabi Gerig **
*Hannah Saraisky**
ARTS & CULTURE DESK
*Ellie Trinkle *†*
Anthony Cinquina
Virginia Frau
*Norah Khan **
Tulip Larson
Gus Morrill
SPORTS DESK
*Ting Cui *†*
Brooke Friberg
MULTIMEDIA DESK
June Su †
VISUALS DESK
Mia Levings
Idanesi Ojior
Skiles Roberts-Salvador
David Zhao
PUZZLES DESK
Josh Harkins
Egan Turner
ONLINE EDITORS
Kayleigh Christley
Mattea Fisher
Clio Seikaly Huber
Phi Nguyen
Wendy Wang
Celina Xu
Iris Xu
LAYOUT EDITORS
Noor Khan
Henry Putnam
Gideon Wolf

**Member of Editorial Board*
† Senior Editor

The Campus reserves the right to deny publication of all or part of a submission for any reason. This includes, but is not limited to: the making of assertions based on hearsay; the relation of private conversations; the libelous mention of unverifiable events; the use of vulgar language or personal attacks; unwarranted requests for anonymity.

More information about the paper and its submission policies can be found online at www.middleburycampus.com.

The opinions expressed by contributors to the Opinions section, as well as reviews, columns, editorial comics and other commentary, are views of the individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the newspaper. The Campus welcomes letters to the editor at 250 words or less, or opinions submissions at 800 words or less.

@middleburycampus
@middcampus
The Middlebury Campus

SPECS PANTHER: WHY MIDDLEBURY NEEDS HARM REDUCTION IN CONSENT EDUCTION

Op-Ed

Emma Cook *is a member of the class of 2027 and a SPECS Peer-Educator.*

SPECS Panther is a mascot for SPECS (sex positive education for college students) and serves the Middlebury community. As a part of Health & Wellness Education, SPECS Panther seeks to educate and spark independent dialogue, not be the end-all be-all resource on campus. We encourage Midd Kids to break down the walls of silence by engaging in sex-positive conversation — wherever, with whomever and about whatever is most comfortable, easy, and safe for you. Our editions will be educational!

Sex Positive Education for College Students (SPECS) addresses topics such as consent and communication, pleasure, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and safer sex practices. SPECS knows that Middlebury's diverse student body includes individuals from varying domestic and international backgrounds with conflicting sexual education experiences. Importantly, such conversations about sexual health are incomplete without acknowledging the role that substances — particularly alcohol — play in shaping sexual experiences and risks, and how harm reduction strategies can provide a solution.

According to a 2017 study conducted by Columbia University's Mailman School of Public Health, more than half of undergraduate students who reported experiencing sexual assault indicated that alcohol or another incapacitating substance was involved. Data provided by the National Institute on Drug Abuse further supports this, noting that sexual assaults are more likely to occur in social settings where alcohol is consumed, such as parties and bars. Certain marginalized or vulnerable populations face disproportionately higher risks of sexual assault on college campuses, according to the American Psychological Association.

Given these intersecting risks, harm reduction must be at the core of how colleges educate students about both sex and substance use rather than abstinence, stigmatization or fear-based messaging. At Middlebury, the Health & Wellness Education Office recently renewed its efforts to provide intersectional education on consent and substance use, creating substance-free spaces and working to dismantle the stigma surrounding both sex and substances. Everyone — regardless of whether they choose to use substances — deserves access to safe, consensual and pleasurable sexual experiences.

SPECS uses the Planned Parenthood model of consent that defines consent as a freely given, reversible, informed, enthusiastic and specific agreement to engage in sexual activity. However, alcohol impairs inhibitory control, reduces a person's ability to communicate effectively and undermines their capacity to give or recognize valid consent. Despite these impairments, 71% of college students surveyed reported confidence in their ability to provide sexual consent while drinking, according to a study published by Ohio State University. Studies like this reveal a need for more nuanced discussion about alcohol and sex.

Alcohol consumption is associated with increased sexual activity, heightened sexual arousal and greater engagement in sexual risk behaviors. It can increase self-confidence and help individuals overcome feelings of social awkwardness, enabling them to engage in enjoyable social and sexual interactions. While alcohol is often involved in instances of sexual misconduct, it can also lead to pleasurable experiences for some, which is why sexual education needs to move beyond abstinence messaging.

A harm reduction approach acknowledges the distinction between intoxication and incapacitation, while emphasizing the importance of proactive communication and boundary-setting. Alcohol does not automatically negate a person's ability to consent, but it can seriously impact judgment, communication and decision-making. One's level of impairment is directly related to the amount of alcohol they have consumed, and it ultimately determines one's capacity to consent to sexual activity.

While intoxication diminishes a person's ability to communicate effectively, incapacitation — marked by slurred or incomprehensible speech, vomiting, incontinence, unconsciousness or inability to stay awake — entirely eliminates a person's ability to provide valid consent. Though these states are distinct in theory, recognizing the difference between intoxication and incapacitation can be difficult in practice, prompting the golden rule: When in doubt, wait it out.

In uncertain situations, consent and boundary-setting must remain the priority. Especially on a college campus setting, there is little difference between rushing to an intoxicated sexual encounter on a Friday night and waiting until both people are sober and fully consenting on Saturday, but the reality of violating someone's consent can result in emotional, psychological or legal consequences.

The practice of proactive communication requires continuous space to express one's needs, desires and boundaries. As adrienne maree brown, author of "Pleasure Activism: The Politics of Feeling Good," describes her concept of permeable boundaries, healthy boundaries are flexible and dynamic, adjusting in response to new needs, information, desires and the evolving nature of relationships rather than remaining fixed or rigid.

In this view, consent is not understood as a static agreement or contract, but as an ongoing, relational process. Embracing permeable boundaries encourages individuals to engage in regular communication with themselves and their partners, allowing for natural shifts and adjustments as they occur. This harm reduction approach to boundary-setting recognizes that sustaining consent requires active attention, particularly in environments where substances such as alcohol may affect communication.

For Middlebury students, setting and maintaining permeable boundaries may require a variety of communication strategies and the use of available community resources. Practicing proactive communication can include setting clear expectations before attending social events to checking in with partners during sexual encounters. Utilizing campus resources such as Health and Wellness Education's free safer sex supplies and health coaching sessions, SPECS workshops, the MiddSafe Confidential Advocates' hotline and Health Services appointments can also help students navigate sex and substance use. In the broader area, students can access medical treatment at Porter Medical Center and Planned Parenthood.

To reduce instances of sexual violence, we must implement harm reduction-based education. Such a learning process equips students with the skills to navigate the ambiguous situations involving substances through proactive communication and boundary-setting. Sharing these values liberates us from the systems of oppression that sustain fear-based sexual education and creates a sex-positive culture where autonomy prevails.

NOCTURNE-ING IT UP: STUDENT ARTS FESTIVAL RETURNS FOR ITS EIGHTH YEAR

By VIRGINIA FRAU
Arts & Culture Editor

On the evening of April 26, the arrival of the annual student-run arts festival, Nocturne, coincided with weather characteristic of April; heavy gusts and dark clouds hung over Middlebury, leading organizers to implement the event's rain schedule. Set across four buildings, the event lived up to its sensational reputation despite it all, drawing students from all corners of campus to experience a night of electrifying performances and art installations.

The majority of live performances were staged in Wilson Hall, the Café stage in the Grille, the Gamut Room in Gifford Hall and the Chapel. Axinn housed interactive exhibits, such as fortune telling by writers for the Local Noodle and stationary pieces. Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP)'s "A Legacy of Resistance: In Tribute to Martyrs," honored victims of Israel's genocide on Gaza.

A small number of exhibits were kept outside despite the threat of unpleasant weather. Among them was an interactive display for SNEG's (Sunday Night Environmental Group) Thermal Energy Network campaign. At 6:55 p.m, on my first stop of the night, I came across the exhibit, marked by a small Carrollian cardboard sign reading, "Walk through me!" The narrow octagonal pergola beside it — with words like 'resist,' 'renew,' and 'future' painted on its canvas curtain — led to a lined path. I was halfway to the end of the path before I realized that the area about my knees was being warmed by part of the underground heating system running through green.

Ella Powers '27, the leader of the project, explained how it came to fruition.

"I mapped out one of the main underground steam pipes that transports heat around campus and made people think about the future potential for a more sustainable alternative like thermal energy networks," they said.

I spent the next 30 minutes wandering McCullough, where I found Elena Parietti '27.5's "Collage Corner," an at times highly acerbic, and at others contemplative but consistently sharp collection of multimedia pieces. One piece titled "Bittersweet Success" meditated on "the mixed emotions that come with growing up as a woman and achieving academic success and emotional maturity while leaving behind childhood." A particular favorite consisted simply of a Soul condom wrapper, on top of which laid a single clear marble. The title beside it read, "haha, get it?"

Next, I made my way up the hill (cookie in my hand, courtesy of Weybridge house's display, "Prepare & Rejoice") to the Chapel, where I caught the tail end of Swagonometry's house music set. Neon lights flashed through the dark and spun across the pews. Bass thumped. Psychedelic visuals played on the projector at the altar. From where I perched in the southern wing, watching the otherwise tepid, sparsely populated scene below, I was reminded of that one kid in "The Incredibles" who is perpetually waiting for, "something amazing, I guess."

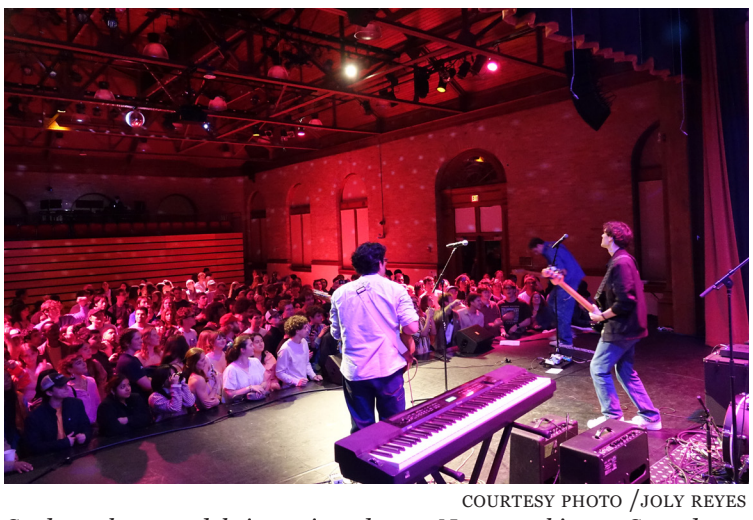
At 7:54 p.m. I entered Axinn, passing a table where Norah Khan '27 and Sharon Kotei '27 were challenging students to answer trivia questions while eating hot wings. "Warm Ones," as they called it, was inspired by Sean Evans's Youtube series "Hot Ones".

Finding myself slightly overwhelmed by the swarms waiting to have their faces painted or their palm lines traced, I followed the sound of a sweet piano melody coming from room 232. Inside, I found the space practically empty, and completely dark, save for the light leaking in the windows from nearby streetlamps. There, Scott Young, a member of the custodial staff, tenderly plunked out an original song called "I'll Never Be Alone." Including myself, four people stood and sat, entranced by the music. Young's wife, who encouraged him to explore his interest in composing, recently passed. This song was dedicated to her.

Twenty minutes later, I sat at a table overlooking the stage in the Grille and watched as OSM Music completed their soundcheck while an audience trickled in through the door downstairs. From here, I was perfectly positioned to take in the band's graceful rendition of Emmylou Harris's "Bury Me Beneath the Willow". I also watched as one especially light-footed student led a considerably sized crowd in a simple line dance in the floorspace below.

At 8:40 p.m. I passed by a member of the Cockroach Circus as they adjusted their stilts on my way inside Wilson Hall. The show followed a band of cockroaches from a post-apocalyptic Earth as they explored their 'Theories of Defeation' with which they would combat the comically antagonistic Exterminator (who exploited the cockroach population for their eggs in order to fuel his rocketship to Mars). The piece — a result of collaborative script-writing and improvisation — took inspiration from Jenny Hozer's collection of "Truisms" and "The Roach Manifesto" by the Museum of Everyday Life.

"Long live cockroach kind. We love



COURTESY PHOTO / JOLY REYES
Students showcased their music and art at Nocturne this past Saturday.

salt and brass music," said Charlotte Roberts '25, who helped to design and starred in the performance.

At 9:26 p.m., seated on the floor of the Gamut room, awaiting the start of Erectile Function's set, I was driven out with the crowd by the blaring of an ill-timed fire alarm in Gifford hall. Thirteen minutes later, after some rude but light-hearted shouts by audience members and the determination by Public Safety that it was safe to return inside, Thomas Long '25 kicked off the band's performance, announcing, "We're gonna get very erect tonight." Amidst a couple of rousing Billy Joel covers, the a cappella performance of "Bones in the Ocean" stunned with chillingly beautiful vocals.

Erectile Function was followed by Adonai and His Angels. Frontman Adonai Haile '27's dreamy voice led covers of popular 60/70's songs by artists like Elton John, The Temptations, and Marvin Gaye.

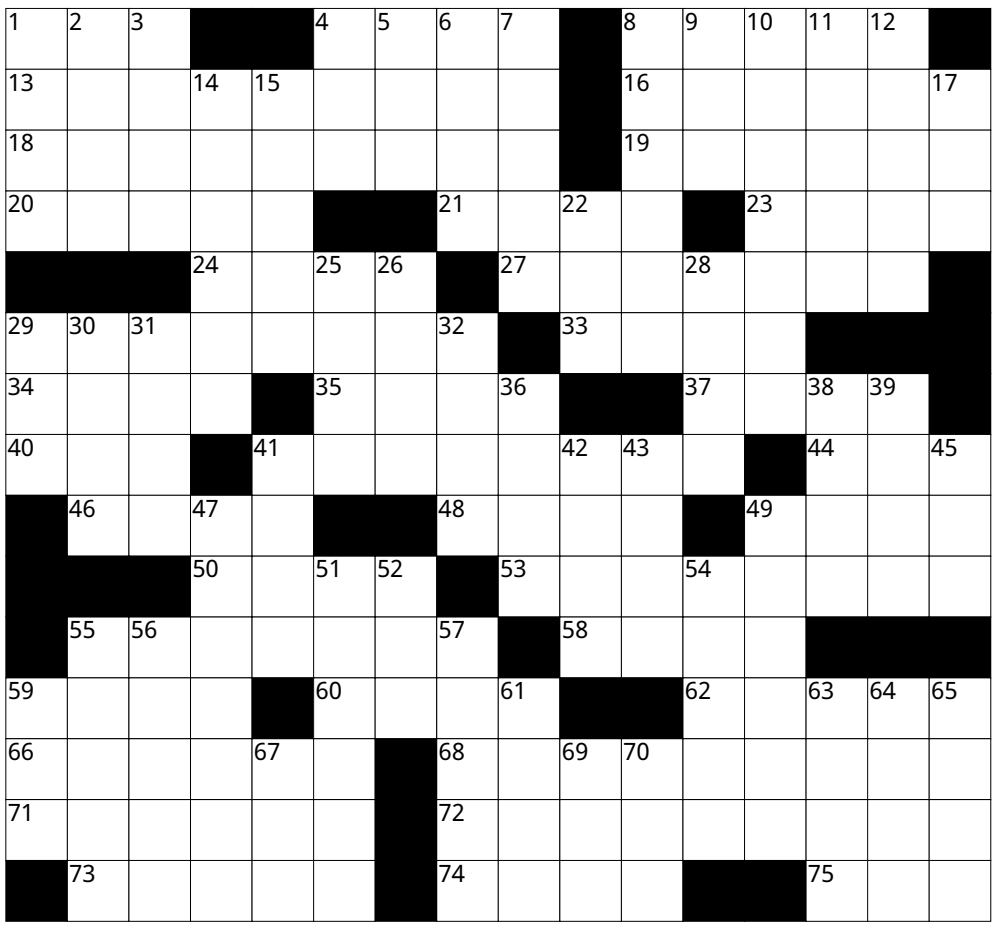
Before the night's much awaited finale, I made sure to catch Backyard Jams' performance on the Wilson Hall Stage. They performed, to the thrill of the large crowd, familiar favorites such as the Eagles' "Hotel California," Amy Winehouse's "Valerie," and "Can't Stop" by the Red Hot Chili Peppers (a throwback to last year's set).

At 11:48 p.m. I watched as crowds marched up Chapel Hill to see the closing show by the all-senior and much-beloved band, Soop Spoons. Classic covers of theirs, like "The Weight" by the Band and "Charleston Girl" by Tyler Childers delighted the animated audience, who filled the Chapel and crowded the landing in front of the altar, belting out to every song all the while.

"Performing with Soop Spoons at the midnight event was something [the band has] been dreaming about since freshman year," vocalist and banjo player Samantha-Grey Solomon '25 told me. "We were so overwhelmed and excited by the roar of the Chapel that night. Soop Spoons ending is easily one of the hardest things about leaving Middlebury."

But Who Shot First?

Garrett Durso-Finley



ACROSS
1 "Monsters, ___"
4 Bruins' sch.
8 Baby sheep
13 *Diss track about Drake that won 5 Grammys in February
16 Cuneiform discovery site
18 *Comedian slapped by Will Smith in 2022
19 *Singer Carey who beefed with 66-Across
20 A golf course has 18
21 Lakers legend, familiarly
23 NBA periods
24 Benchwarmers
27 Popular sports betting site, or a stan fight, perhaps
29 Gathered, as troops, or a homophone of the producer of 13-Across
33 Eye affliction
34 Creme-filled cookie
35 Years and years
37 Poet Pound or actor Miller
40 Tiger Woods' org.
41 Major film franchise celebrated this Sunday, or the theme of the starred clues
44 ___-Wan Kenobi of 41-Across
46 Muppet who refers to himself in the third person
48 Windu of 41-Across
49 Novel idea?
50 "And another thing..."
53 *Beef, or a Taylor Swift song about hers with Katy Perry
55 Really ticks off
58 The Big Easy, for short
59 Protagonist
60 Snaky swimmers
62 Belly button type, or severed floor worker
66 *"Rap God" who beefed with 19-Across
68 *Ex-VP who beefed with Alexander Hamilton
71 Treating badly
72 *Title of Tati Westbrook's YouTube attack on James Charles
73 "Cut me some ___!"
74 Taxpayer IDs
75 Radical '60s org.

DOWN
1 Foot fraction
2 NYC area above Houston Street
3 Shift key neighbor
4 Kyiv's land: Abbr.
5 Co. captain?
6 Fortune
7 Request from
8 Bemoan
9 Reddit Q&A
10 *"100 Years of Solitude" author once punched by a fellow Latin Nobelist over a woman
11 Lite-___ (classic toy with translucent pegs)
12 Sound from an angry dog
14 Deceives
15 Campus printing?
17 Sounds of relief
22 Middlebury College degs.
25 What Kamala Harris is, according to a singer's endorsement
26 Sonic the Hedgehog's company
28 Changes the color of
29 Floor cleaner
30 Strong desire
31 Close, as an envelope
32 Suffix in moisturizer name
36 Q-tip, e.g.
38 Caramel-filled candy
39 "Peek-___!"
41 Auctioneer's final word
42 Open ___ of worms
43 Try again
45 "___ be my pleasure!"
47 *"Queen of Pop" who recently ended her beef with Elton John
49 Backups
51 Appear to be fine
52 Small bill
54 Russian crepes
55 Viral jokes
56 Default docs font
57 Hunks of marble
59 Clothes line?
61 Utters
63 Squirrel's hoard
64 Ticked off
65 Makes a mistake
67 And so on: Abbr.
69 Kylo ___ of 41-Across
70 CIA predecessor

A PERFECT FINALE: IBRAGIMOVA AND TIBERGHIEN CLOSE MIDDLEBURY'S 105TH PERFORMING ARTS SERIES

By YUHAN ZHANG
Staff Writer

THE MIDDLEBURY CAMPUS / YUHAN ZHANG
Ibragimova and Tiberghein were a dynamic duo in Robison Concert Hall this past Sunday.

The sublime artistry of violinist Alina Ibragimova and pianist Cédric Tiberghien echoed in Robinson Concert Hall this past Sunday, as the pair delivered a performance that marked the end of Middlebury College's 105th Performing Arts Series season. The duo program featured Janáček's "Violin Sonata," JW VII/7, Enescu's "Violin Sonata No. 3 in A Minor," Gerald Barry's vivacious "Triorchic Blues" and Beethoven's iconic "Kreutzer" Sonata.

Ibragimova and Tiberghien, both alumni of the BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artists program, have cultivated a remarkable musical partnership over 20 years. This event marked Tiberghien's return to Middlebury and Ibragimova's first visit. Their collaboration has been lauded by The Times of London, which observed that "Both of these players have the potential to conquer the world."

The pair is currently on their North American tour, which includes a short visit to Vermont. They will also appear in a Music Theory course this week to share their insights and techniques as established musicians. The program features three sonatas in four pieces, with four composers from four different cultures: Czech, Romanian, Irish and German.

The first piece played was the "Violin Sonata," JW VII/7, by Leoš Janáček (1854–1928). Unlike the traditional sonata forms of his predecessors, Janáček's writing is raw, fragmented and highly expressive. His compositional style has heavily impacted many modern-day composers, including Billy Childs, whose composition was played by the Isidore Quartet as part of Middlebury's Performing Arts Series earlier this year. The piece is marked by sharp contrasts: lyrical, folk-like melodies are suddenly interrupted by jagged rhythms and dissonant harmonies.

"A traditional fourth movement or a finale [of a sonata] would be another fast movement like the opening fast movement. But Janáček does something unusual. He uses adagio (slow tempo) at the end. He was a very non-traditional composer," Professor Emeritus of Music Larry Hamberlin said in the pre-concert lecture.

The second piece played, "Violin Sonata No. 3 in A Minor, Op. 25" by George Enescu (1881-1955) is a celebration of Romanian folk music. Composed in 1926, the sonata bears the subtitle "dans le caractère populaire roumain" meaning "in the Romanian popular style. "Throughout its three movements, Enescu used chromatic modes to blur the traditional distinction between major and minor tonalities. The composer worked to make the piano sound like the Cobza, a short-necked lute traditional Romanian string instrument, and the Cimbalom, a trapezoidal instrument with many metal strings, similar to the inner part of a piano.

In this composition, the violin attempts to imitate the traditional Romanian wind instrument, which has a sweet, clear and slightly airy tone. While the violin score featured many detailed notations — leaving less room for improvisation — Ibragimova brought a fresh take to the piece (along with a few broken bow hairs).

The third piece, "Triorchic Blues" by Irish composer Gerald Barry, is an experimental work that has been performed as a piano solo, a violin solo, and even an aria in Barry's opera "The Triumph of Beauty and Deceit." Ibragimova and Tiberghien reworked this piece into a duo of piano and violin for this program — a compositional choice that delighted the audience.

The program closed with a classic of the Western tradition, Beethoven's "The Kreutzer Sonata."Originally composed for violinist George Bridgetower, this sonata was premiered by Bridgetower and Beethoven in 1803. However, after a personal falling out, Beethoven withdrew his dedication to Bridgetower and renamed the piece after French violinist Rodolphe Kreutzer, who never performed it. The sonata's raw intensity has inspired many literary and artistic responses in the centuries since it was composed.

In Leo Tolstoy's 1889 novel "The Kreutzer Sonata," the piece symbolizes obsessive jealousy, exploring the destructive power of music and passion. The sonata explores similar themes; the violin and piano engage in a fierce dialogue in its first movement, a polite fight in the second and a playful conversation in the third.

While this concert marked the end of the 105th season of the Performing Arts Series, Ibragimova and Tiberghien's performance reminded us of the endless possibilities of musical collaboration and the ability of great music to transcend time, culture and personal experiences.

A BIG THIEF OF MY TIME: ADRIANNE LENKER'S "LIVE AT REVOLUTION HALL"

By GUS MORRILL
Arts & Culture Editor

Ten days before the release of Adrianne Lenker's most recent live album, "Live at Revolution Hall," this past Thursday, the artist's label 4AD put out a release promoting the upcoming album. This page included a tracklist of all 43 songs and conversations as a "loving memento from one friend to another," demanding to be consumed with the same engagement one would devote to a film.

Indeed throughout its two hour runtime, the album comes across as the auditory equivalent to an old home movie. "Live at Revolution Hall" was recorded on cassette tapes across three dates of Lenker's most recent tour, and contains a multitude of warm moments within a grainy atmosphere. "Born for Loving You" transitions into a brief cover of Dolly Parton's "I Will Always Love You," an impromptu chorus of whistles breaks out from the audience, and Lenker brings out her brother Noah for a jaw harp solo on "Spud Infinity." Moreover, Revolution Hall itself is a repurposed high school auditorium, and the intimacy of the venue comes across with every cough, sneeze and whistle.

In an interview with Pitchfork magazine, Lenker describes learning the guitar from her father when she was just six years old, influenced by a love for music present throughout her family. Under the guidance of her father, she opted not to go to high school, citing time within recording studios as her education. Lenker described a certain urgency behind her creative process, needing a place to put her "curiosity and fascination with existence."

There are five new songs featured on this album. "fangs," which is seemingly recorded during a sound check, reminisces about the joys and pains of a previous relationship, while "no limit - live" sees Lenker wonder "How do I find you now / When you echo like a dream / Over the machine of this town?". Each word is chosen with intention, piecing together fond memories, longing or appreciation for specific people in her life. In "oldest - live," Lenker describes scenes of packed cars and torrential rain as she tries to reconnect with a friend she once knew, while "i do love you - live" is an appeal to the immediacy of love in response to the doubts of another. My personal favorite of this group was "ripples & happy birthday alice," which was replete with Lenker's velvety tones and poetic devotion.

The song also featured exchanges from a birthday party held for a member of Lenker's team, and throughout the live album there were several moments which offered fleeting glimpses into Lenker's life while touring. These included the artist spending time with her dog Oso, negotiating signatures on merchandise with fans and conversing with friends. These interactions show a more human side to an individual whose artistry has mythologized her for many fans. It is here where Dylan and Lenker diverge; where the former is cloaked in mystery, the latter talks in silly voices to her team and laughs at her audience's exuberance.

On the topic of influences, it is clear that Lenker draws from a deep well. In the same Pitchfork interview, the singer-songwriter cited Elliot Smith, Iris DeMint, Nina Simone, Fleetwood Mac and John Prine as some of the most formative bands or artists for her own work. "Live at Revolution Hall" illuminates other influences with a cover of Leonard Cohen's "Lady Midnight" and a recitation of Robert Burn's poem "Now Westlin' Winds." However, the artist's exigence stems from more than those who inspire her; in her Pitchfork interview, Lenker describes the "bugs, furniture, and little dark corners" of her Minnesota upbringing as equally pivotal.

Throughout my listening experience, the word "community" kept coming to mind. There was a smaller community of those around Lenker during this tour, including manager Tim Wironen, background vocalist and pianist Nick Hakim, violinist and guitarist Josefin Runsteen, and several venue employees, together working to maintain integrity to a specific artistic vision. This project was also made with fans in mind, featuring fan messages to the singer and audience singing drowning out Lenker's vocals on a couple of songs including masterpieces such as "anything" and "not a lot, just forever."

However, Lenker's community can even be thought of in a broader sense. In "donut seam - live," the singer opines, "This whole world is dying / Don't it seem like a good time for swimming / Before all the water disappears?"

It is perhaps this perspective that makes her artistry so compelling. She encapsulates a particular cynicism and sadness — both personal and worldly — and yet consistently fills this void with the details and people that she holds dear.

SALVATORE FILMES APRESENTA
Betânia
UM FILME DE MARCELO BOTTA
74 Internationale Filmfestspiele Berlin
Panorama
COM DIANA MATTOS, TIÃO CARVALHO, CAÇULA RODRIGUES, NÁDIA D'CÁSSIA, MICHELLE CABRAL, TIM VIDAL, ANOUK MULARD, ROSA EWERTON JARA, VITÃO SANTIAGO, APRESENTANDO ULYSSES AZEVEDO
FOTOGRAFIA BRUNO GRAZIANO ARTE MARIANA CRISTAL HUI SOM RAONI GRUBER MONTAGEM MÁRCIO HASHIMOTO MIXAGEM CAIO GUERIN E ARMANDO TORRES JR. COR MARCUS TENCHELLA E LUISA CAVANAGH
PRODUÇÃO ASSOCIADA MARCELO CAMPANÉR, MÁRCIO HASHIMOTO, PAULA COSENZA E JOÃO QUEROZ PRODUÇÃO EXECUTIVA LUCIANA COELHO E ISABEL ABDUCH PRODUZIDO POR GABRIEL DI GIACOMO
HIRSCHFIELD
HIRSCHFIELD THURSDAYS
THURSDAY MAY 8TH, 7:00 PM
SUNDERLAND LANGUAGE CENTER, DANA AUDITORIUM
FREE!
UPCOMING FILMS AT GO.MIDDLEBURY.EDU/HIRSCHFIELD
SPONSORED BY THE FILM AND MEDIA DEPARTMENT AND THE HIRSCHFIELD FILM ENDOWNMENT
Middlebury

BASEBALL RIDING EIGHT-GAME WIN STREAK AS NESCAC PLAYOFFS APPROACH

By THEO MANIATIS
Staff Writer

COURTESY PHOTO / BRIAN FOLEY

Men's Baseball won their home game against Skidmore this weekend. Pablo Spielman-Rodriquez pictured above.

Middlebury baseball's season started like a car in the dead of Vermont winter — slow to turn over but now running strong. The Panthers extended their winning streak to eight games last weekend, demolishing Skidmore in a doubleheader (13–3, 13–7).

In Friday's opener, the team traveled to Saratoga Springs, N.Y. The game was tied after two innings, before Middlebury unleashed a six-run avalanche in the third to take a 7–1 advantage, highlighted by Will Ashley '27's two-run blast. Kyle McCausland '25 extended the lead to 13–3 with a home run in the seventh, while also adding two doubles, giving him 44 for his career and setting a new Middlebury program record.

Sunday's contest at Forbes Field featured a nerve-wracking comeback. By the third inning, Skidmore had surged out to a deflating six-run lead through two home runs, including one that towered 400 feet over the left field wall.

NESCAC player of the week Nathan Samii '25 and teammate Ben Slaughter '25 responded with back-to-back homers, and the Panthers completed the comeback in the seventh when Isaac Rosario '25 launched a game-tying home run. In the top of the eighth inning, Stefano Yozzo '27 held Skidmore's offense before the Panthers erupted for six runs to complete the sweep. Middlebury is now an impressive 26–10 in their all-time record against Skidmore.

After early season mishaps and missteps, Middlebury baseball has found their groove in emphatic fashion. In the season's first three games, the college was easily swept by a well-prepared Emory program. A subsequent four-game winning streak hinted at potential recovery before Vermont State Lyndon beat the Panthers 6–4, marking an existential threat for baseball this season.

Despite defensive struggles — 29 errors across their first 18 games — the Panthers managed to capture enough wins just to stay afloat in the league. Then, the tides turned. Since the spring break trip to California, the Panthers have gone 12–3, with sweeps against NESCAC rivals Wesleyan University and Williams College. Against Skidmore last Friday, the team reached 20 wins for the fifth season straight.

"We've been able to turn a corner just because the young guys are getting more experienced, more comfortable and coming into their own and playing really good baseball," Samii told The Campus.

Baseball Head Coach Mike Leonard told The Campus in March that the younger players would need time to become comfortable in larger roles. His early-season prediction has come true. Ashley and fellow sophomore Aiden Han '27 are succeeding in the starting lineup, both recording successes against Skidmore while Stefano Yozzo '27 has compiled a 1.80 Earned Run Average (ERA) across 20 innings — already 10 more than last year. Meanwhile, Pablo Spielman-Rodriguez '28 is hitting .283.

"I think we're still just scratching the surface of what we can be," Ashley told the Campus. "This is a super talented group, and like we've mentioned, we're super young."

Samii said he has embraced the mentorship aspect of this season's journey for these younger teammates.

"In the past we've all kind of been pieces of the puzzle and had a lot of older guys surrounding us and we've been supplements to that success," he reflected. "But I think this year to be the older guys and cultivate an environment where the younger guys can thrive as a piece and not have to take over has been really cool."

If there is one problem for the Panthers, it is pitching depth. The staff has been depleted by injuries all season, including the loss of Justin Lessing '25 one of the best pitchers in the program's history. In five of the past six games, the Panthers have surrendered more than six runs against mediocre opponents. The offense scored more than 10 runs in each of those contests, but the Panther's pitching staff is still searching for consistency as the games grow more meaningful to their future prospects.

As May approaches, the NESCAC playoffs are just around the corner. Having won the title in 2022 and 2024, Middlebury will have a target on their backs in the league.

"Everybody else in the NESCAC, their goal is to beat Middlebury," Samii explained. "The other teams in the NESCAC don't like playing us. They don't want to play us."

A third consecutive NESCAC title would send the Panthers to the NCAA tournament, where they've fallen to the eventual champion in each of the past two seasons. The team has yet to win the NCAA tournament in their history, but Samii said the Panthers won't shy from the challenge.

"I'm not scared of anyone," Samii said. "I know that if we play the way we have been playing and the way that we can play, I think I have all the confidence in the world going into the playoffs."

After a lackluster start, The Panthers have turned their season around in miraculous fashion and appear to be peaking at the right time this month. Regardless of how the end of the season goes, the future for this program looks bright, especially with its core of young players who will only grow stronger in the years to come.

SEVEN QUESTIONS WITH BILLY CURTIS '25, MEN'S LACROSSE

By BROOKE FRIBERG
Sports Editor

Billy Curtis '25, from Beverly Farms, Mass., is a senior attackman on the Middlebury men's lacrosse team. Curtis recently broke a 42-year-old program record for the most assists in a single game with seven assists. As he wraps up his Middlebury career, we caught up with Curtis to document his legacy, both on and off the field.

Brooke Friberg: When did you first start playing lacrosse, and did you always know you wanted to play in college?

Billy Curtis: I started playing lacrosse when I was five or six years old. Growing up, I played soccer, hockey and lacrosse, and never really knew which sport I wanted to pursue in college, or if that was even a possibility. Hockey was my favorite sport through middle school and I was probably most committed to it. But playing competitive lacrosse at Deerfield Academy in high school flipped a switch for me. I started falling in love with lacrosse, and from there, it became a dream to have the opportunity to play at the college level.

BF: What was your first impression of Middlebury, and what was it like joining the team?

BC: My whole life, I've grown up driving through Middlebury's campus on the way to Keene Valley, New York, where my family spends a lot of time. Even as a kid, I was always stunned by how beautiful and well-kept the campus looked. When I stepped foot on campus as a first year student, I was still blown away, but even more than that, I felt genuinely welcomed. Having 50 teammates already in my corner made the transition to college much easier. I'll always remember how inclusive and friendly the team was right from the start. Upperclassmen would randomly text first years to hang out, which made a huge impact. That kind of buy-in from the upperclassmen is a big reason why our team culture is so strong.

BF: What's your most unforgettable moment with Middlebury men's lacrosse?

BC: Beating Tufts my freshman year is hands down my most unforgettable moment. That year, we weren't the most talented or skilled team, and we had gotten off to a rocky start. Tufts, on the other hand, had one of the strongest teams in the country. It was a perfect, sunny day at our home field. I remember seeing Tufts get off the bus looking like they expected to roll over us easily. I remember the week before, our team had put in so much preparation, and we completely trusted our coaches and game plan. Honestly, I think we were the only people who believed we could win that game. We ended up winning, 21–14, our highest goal total all season. I was fortunate enough to have my best game of the year too, with four goals and four assists. The energy and belief we shared that day will always stick with me.

BF: What's your favorite thing about your teammates?

BC: My favorite thing is how committed everyone is to building and
maintaining our strong team culture. Coach Campbell has done an amazing job recruiting not
just great players, but great people who really understand what it means to be part of this program. Sometimes lacrosse teams get a negative reputation for being full of "lax bros," but
each guy on this team proves those stereotypes wrong every day. It's special to be part of a team that already has a great culture but still shows up every day wanting to protect and strengthen it.

BF: Do you have any pre-game rituals you couldn't play without?

BC: I actually don't have any specific pre-game rituals. Before games, I usually have a lot of thoughts running through my mind, but I always come back to one thing: trusting my preparation and being confident about that.

BF: What will you miss most about Middlebury?

BC: I'll miss the people the most. I've found some of my best friends here and made incredible
memories that I'll carry for life. Being on the lacrosse team gave me 50 best friends, and I've
also met so many amazing people outside of sports. Being surrounded by your closest friends in
such a beautiful place is special, and after graduation, it's hard to know when everyone will ever be together like that again.

BF: What's your favorite restaurant in Middlebury and why?

BC: American Flatbread is my favorite restaurant in Middlebury. The pizza is some of the best I've had, I especially recommend the Apple Bacon Cheddar pizza. It's incredible. The restaurant also has a great, family-style atmosphere, and it's become a go-to spot for me, my family and my friends after a big team win.

COURTESY PHOTO / WILL COSTELLO

Billy Curtis '25 broke a 42 year old lacrosse record this season by recording seven assists in a single game.

MIDDLEBURY MEN'S TRACK & FIELD CLAIMS NESCAC CHAMPIONSHIP: TRIUMPH OF A BROTHERHOOD

By TING CUI
Senior Sports Editor

COURTESY PHOTO / STOCKTON PHOTO

Men's Track and Field won their first NESCAC title in six years.

Five points.

That was the razor-thin margin that separated history from heartbreak for the Middlebury men's track and field team who were underdogs heading into last weekend's NESCAC Championship. The Panthers tallied 169 points to edge out Amherst College's 164, capturing their first conference title in six years and just the third championship in program history.

"It felt like Doctor Strange running through all the possibilities," said Hayden Bobowick '28. "There was only one way it would work, and it all came down to about five points."

The championship day started with field events setting a powerful tone. Dave Filias '25 won the hammer throw with 57.47 meters, while teammates Dan Urchuk '25 and Darnel Cineas '25 added fourth and eighth-place points. In the high jump, Sam McGarrahan '25.5 delivered a historic performance with a record-breaking leap of 2.00 meters, shattering the previous NESCAC record. The throws team later continued accumulating crucial points in shot put with three Panthers securing top-five finishes.

What truly electrified the team was their freshman class stepping up on the biggest stage. The 4x100 relay team of Marco Motroni '25, Emerson Kington '28, Bobowick and Donnell "DJ" Harvey Jr. '28 secured gold with a time of 41.54 seconds, shattering the school record. The victory sparked a celebration with "100 people in the circle."

"I remember I was freaked out," Kington recalled. "I thought, 'Give me my trophy now.' It felt so right. They obliterated everyone else."

Harvey Jr. dominated the 100-meter dash with 10.79 seconds. In prelims, despite being seeded fifth, he ran with veteran confidence like he has been all season. In the 110-meter hurdles, Quinn Kennedy '26 claimed silver in 14.89 seconds (after being seeded eighth), while Finn Albright '27 took seventh. The momentum was building.

"DJ was running around like he's been there a million times," said Izzo Lizardi '25. "That was one moment I knew these young guys were very locked in to really change history."

By mid-meet, the Panthers had built a commanding 139–96 advantage. But the emotional rollercoaster was just beginning.

Xander Swann '25 emerged as the meet's MVP. First, he captured gold in the 400 meters with a personal best 47.92 seconds — the only competitor under 48 seconds. Then, just an hour later, Swann took second in the grueling 400-meter hurdles with another personal record of 51.96 seconds – missing first by a mere 0.03 seconds.

"He just got out there and attacked it," Kington said. "When I saw that, I knew we were gaining real momentum."

Just when victory seemed assured, Amherst mounted a furious comeback in the distance events, unexpectedly going one-two in the 1500 meters and winning both the 800 meters and 5000 meters. As their lead shrank, the Panthers' tension mounted.

"The lead kept shrinking," McGarrahan said. "I was very superstitious. No one wanted to look at the team score. As soon as someone pulled out their phone, I would duck away."

With just five points separating the teams, everything came down to the 4x800 relay and triple jump. Middlebury coaching staff had made a strategic decision to pull their best 800-meter runners from the individual event and save them for the relay.

The strategy paid off brilliantly. While Amherst's tired runners "crashed and burned," the fresh legs of Zach Utz '26, Lachlan Bishop '26, Cameron Miles '28 and Will Lavey '25 secured a crucial second-place finish with a time of 7:39.26.

Notably, the team trusted first year Miles to anchor the relay. "Lavey is a captain of our team, and he was like, 'I want Cam to anchor. I trust Cam,'" Lazardi explained. "The guy with the least NESCAC experience — they put the baton in his hand and said, 'Cam, bring it home.' And he did."

"The energy around the track was insane," Miles said. "At every single point, there were just people screaming. It was the loudest I've ever heard a track meet."

By the time the 4x800 finished, calculations showed it was mathematically impossible for Amherst to catch up in triple jump – the final event of the day. Still, the team's anxiety persisted until the very end, with everyone running calculations over and over.

The emotional dam finally broke when confirmation came from an unexpected source.

"Riley and Jackson from the women's team came down with tears in their eyes," McGarrahan remembered. "At that point, we hadn't accepted that we had won… but then we realized we didn't do the math wrong. We won." What followed was an emotional release three years in the making for the seniors.

Ask the athletes what made the difference in their five-point victory, and they'll point to something that doesn't show up in the results: brotherhood.

"We won with love," Lazardi said.

Throughout the competition, every member of the approximately 70-person roster was present, whether competing or not.

"The guys who weren't competing were everywhere," Harvey Jr. said. "I remember McGarrahan just finished high jump, came off his win and immediately picked me up after our relay. I was in the air, didn't even expect it."

The seniors, who contributed approximately 90 of the team's 169 points, led not just in scoring but in spirit.

"At no point were the seniors scoring for glory," Harvey Jr. said. "They were there for us. They were there to support, and winning was the first goal."

This created a unique motivation in pressure-filled moments.

"When they are brothers that you love who are chanting your name, your name has such a different meaning. You can hear that in your voice — they're not just fans, they're brothers," Bobowick said.

By five points, the team made history, created memories and reminded themselves why they compete in the first place. The competition was tough, and at the end of the day everyone was a contributor to the win. For the Middlebury men's track and field program, this championship wasn't just the end of a six-year drought — it was validation of a brotherhood built practice by practice, season by season. And it might well be just the beginning of a new dynasty.